

A BOOK OF POEMS

By WILBUR D. NESBIT



THE HISTORY OF THE

REIGN OF

CHARLES THE FIRST

BY

A BOOK OF POEMS

BY

WILBUR D. NESBIT



With Five Illustrations by
ELLSWORTH YOUNG



SUBSCRIPTION EDITION



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To Richard and Robert



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WHEN LITTLE CHILDREN SING

Ho, children sing as bees or birds,
With little heed for time or words,
Yet mystically they impart
The gladness that is in the heart—
They have no sense of rule or rhyme
Nor care for measure-beat of time;
 They only sing
From their sheer joy in everything.

Some senseless sentence they have made
While carelessly they dreamed or played
They weave into a chanted glee
Wherein is all of melody,
And rapt of eyes and sweet of face
They make each spot a happy place.

 We older ones
Would catch the childsong as it runs.

The child knows all the songs of earth—
And each song has its tone of mirth—
The child hears all the harmonies
Of rustling grass and windswept trees;
The chanting, humming girl or boy

WHEN LITTLE CHILDREN SING

Knows all the world's dim strain of joy
And bit by bit
The childsong holds and echoes it.

If you or I might tune our souls
To the true harmony that rolls
Above, below, and all around,
Our songs would lose their harsher sound;
We might, as little girls and boys,
Unconsciously sing to our toys—
Then I and you
Might strike one note that would ring true.

Perhaps the great triumphal chord
The angels sing before the Lord,
The dawn-song of the stars and suns
Is like the song of little ones—
Pure, sweet, untouched of skill or art,
But welling from the inmost heart
A perfect thing—
Such songs the little children sing.

THE MYSTERY

Sometimes my papa, when it's night an' time to go
to bed,
He takes me on his lap—an' nen I cuddle down my
head
An' he 'ist hold me nice an' close an' sing a lot of
things
All whispery an' soft—you know the way your papa
sings.
An' nen—next thing I know, why, it's tomorrow! An'
I've been
Tooked to my bed—an' I don't know who was it
tucked me in.

My papa, when he says 'at he will sing me off to
sleep,
He holds my head against him—an' there's something
awful deep
An' buzzin' like inside o' him, like our cat when it
purrs.
An' he 'ist laugh—an' mama, too—when I ast where
is her's,
'Cause she don't purr at all. But most 'at puzzles
me is why
Next thing I know I'm wakin' up an' lookin' at the
sky.

THE MYSTERY

Sometimes when me an' papa sits an' he sings low
to me

I think I'll keep myself awake, an' nen I know I'll
see

Whoever takes me up th' stairs an' turns th' covers
down.

An' by an' by, somehow, when he is singing "Sleepy
Town,"

Why, I forget 'ist when he stops, an' I wake up again
An' I'm right in my little bed, an' it's tomorrow nen.

I ast my papa why it is, an' where does people go
When they think 'at they go to sleep—an' he say he
don't know,

Utceptin' 'at th' best o' life, sometimes, to him, it
seems,

Is when us folks 'at's worn an' tired goes to the Land
o' Dreams.

But I don't know 'ist what that means, an' nen I
wouldn't care

If I knew when I went to bed, an' who put me in
there.

My papa says there's lots o' things 'at we can't un-
derstand,

An' 'at there's lots of paths where we can't see the
guidin' hand,

But 'at if we 'ist do our part, an' keep a movin' on,

THE MYSTERY

The song 'at sings us all to sleep will echo in the
dawn—

We'll lie down in our Father's arms an' wake to find
the day,

An' never ask nor wonder how we came along the
way.

THE WONDER PLACE.

I'm goin' to my grampa's when
Thanksgivin' is—an' we'll go on
Th' train th' longest ways, an' nen
He'll say: "W'y! Is this little John!"
An' nen he'll let me dwive his team
An' laugh 'uhcause I swing th' whip
An' try to "Tehk!" an' ist can't seem
To get th' right twist on my lip.

An' nen we'll dwive right up th' lane
An' to th' house where gramma is—
An' she'll be at th' window pane
An' nen say: "Bless that heart o' his!"
An' hug me tight, an' take me to
Th' fireplace so's I can get warm
An' say 'uhfore th' day is through
She ain't su'prised if it'll storm.

Where grampas live—w'y, 'at's th' place
Thanksgivin' is—an' 'ere's a dog
'At jumps on me an' licks my face
An' nen barks in a hollow log;
An' 'ere's a calf 'at looks at me
Like it don't like th' fings I weared,
But I ist laugh so it can't see
'At I'm a-gettin' half-way scared.

THE WONDER PLACE

An' 'ere's a field 'at's ist as wide!

Wif cornshocks runnin' on for miles,
An' rabbits 'at will jump an' hide

Nen hop on every little whiles.

An' 'ere's a barn where pigeons stay

An' where's a grindstone an' a maul,

An' you can slide down on th' hay

An' grampa ist don't care at all.

My grampa an' my grandma, 'ey

Say 'at I got my papa's hair—

An' his is gone!—an' every day

I sleep in 'at big rockin' chair.

An' grandma all th' time she give

Me cookies; an' she's got a cat

'At sings! Don't you know where they live?

W'y 'ere's th' place Thanksgivin's at!

THE PARIAH

There's Freckles Smith an' Grinner Brown
An' Toothy Bowles—an' all the rest
O' boys 'at is in this here town
Is nicknamed! Even Measles West,
'At's poor as poor, he's got me beat.
Sometimes I wish 'at I could get
A eye out, or lose both my feet—
I haven't got a nickname yet.

You see, a nickname, it ain't like
The one your parunts names you with—
It's got to be a name to strike
Yourself, like "Freckles" does Paul Smith.
An' I ain't got no warts nor moles,
Nor toothache when my clo'es gets wet—
('At's why we call him "Toothy" Bowles)
I haven't got a nickname yet.

If I was fat, or I was thin,
I might be "Meat" or "Skinny" then.
I wisht I had a pimped skin,
Or had a cross eye, or a wen,
Or was left handed, or had spells
That made my jaws an' teeth get set!
I'm simply William Arthur Wells—
I haven't got a nickname yet.

THE PARIAH

You see, already there's a "Bill"

An' "Billy" mixed up in our crowd;
An' that Moore boy up on th' hill,

They call him "Glue," an' he is proud!
I don't know how to get me one,

But I'll be nicknamed yet, I bet,
But now I don't have any fun —

I haven't got a nickname yet!

SUNDAY CLO'ES

I can't go in the yard to play;
I got to sit right here, this way,
An' see the Moore boys an' the Brunns
Play soldier with their swords an' guns;
I can't ride my velocipede—
My mamma told me: "No, indeed!
Why, Alfred Potts, do you suppose
I'd let you spoil your Sunday clo'es?"

I can't run out there in the grass,
Nor hunt a piece o' broken glass
To put out where my playhouse is,
Like Willie Thompson fixes his.
I ast my mamma if I can
Go talk with the old garbage man.
"No, no," she said, "Why, goodness knows
You'd simply wreck your Sunday clo'es."

My face is washed, my hair is brushed,
An' soon as they get baby hushed,
My mamma'll take me down to see
Aunt Emmy—but I just won't be
The least bit happy while I'm there
'Cause I must sit still in my chair

SUNDAY CLO'ES

An' never talk and swing my toes
'Cause I've got on my Sunday clo'es.

I wisht 'at I's a heathen! Yes,
'Cause little heathens never dress,
But run around in just the skin
That they were borned an' grewed up in.
And when the missionaries give
The clo'es to people where I'd live—
There where it never even snows—
I'd say: "Don't send us Sunday clo'es!"

“DOWN STREET ”

Where our house is, w'y you can see
 'Way off to where th' houses gets
As close apart as 'ey can be—
 An' my ma, w'y, she never lets
Me go apast our corner, 'cause
 Some horse might knock me off my feet;
An' she says Mister Santy Claus
 Don't like th' boys 'at goes down street.

So I sit on our steps an' look
 Away off 'ere an' wonder why
Th' houses shuts in like a book
 An' leaves a little slice o' sky
'At stan's on end buhtween 'em so's
 'Ey can't bump up until 'ey meet.
When I get big, w'y, nen I s'pose
 My maw will let me go down street.

'At's where th' fire uhpartment stays
 Utceptin' when it hafto run
Out here—an' nen all of th' drays
 An' wagons dodge, an' 'at is fun!
An' 'at 'ere boy 'at teases me
 An' brings our groceries an' meat
He have a lot o' fun, 'cause he
 Live 'way off where it is down street.

DOWN STREET

One time we went 'ere on a car
An' ride, an' ride, an' ride an' ride
Until I think we gone too far,
But still th' street look just as wide.
An' my ma she make me sit down
An' keep my shoes off of th' seat
An' we just only go downtown
An' never get to see down street.

But when I comed back home I look
An' see how it keeps spreadin' in
Just like when you shut up a book—
'At must be where th' world begin.
I ast my maw, an' nen, w'y, she
Say: "Bless us, what a quaint con-ceit!"
But I just wish, an' wish 'at we
Would move, an' go to live down street.

WHY PA DOESN'T READ

It use' to bother pa a lot if I climb on his knee
When he's a-readin' papers, an' ast him to "let me
see."

I want to see th' pictures an' to ast him what they is—
My ma, she'd tell me not to spoil that readin' time
o' his.

But now, when I come 'round, he throws th' papers
on th' floor,
An' takes me up an' says 'at he don't want to read
no more.

Th' paper's full o' pictures, too—o' little boys an'
girls—

One boy 'at looks a lot like me, ma says, when I had
curls.

I saw her point it out to pa, an' he says: "Yes, it
does."

An' ma, she grab an' hol' me tight, an' say: "What
if it was!"

Pa read about some other boys, about all what they
wore,

An' nen, he hug me, too, an' say he won't read any
more.

WHY PA DOESN'T READ

I got a joke on pa. Today he's readin' in his chair,
An' I come in an' climb his knee while he's a-sitting
there,

An' he put down his paper—nen a grea' big hug I
get—

An' here's th' joke on pa! His eyes an' cheeks they
is all wet!

I tell him 'at he said 'at none but babies ever cry,
An' nen he say big men is babies part th' time, 'at's
why.

It use' to bother pa so much if I come playing 'round,
Or holler when he's readin' things, or make th'
leastes' sound,

But now he says for me to make as much noise as I
please,

Because it sound like music—an' my ma says she
agrees.

An' nen I play, an' pa he leaves his paper on th'
floor—

He says 'at when he looks at me he can't read any
more.

POOR OLD MISTER GREEN

Old Mister Green—w'y he's so old
His hands ist shake like he is cold
('Cause he's got palsy, my ma say
When I ast why they shake 'at way.)
Old Mister Green—I ast him is
There any little boys o' his
'At's lookin' out for Santa Claus,
An' he say: "No, but oncet there was."

An' he ain't got no folks at all—
No little boys to scratch th' wall,
Nor little girls 'at wants a doll,
Nor any pa or ma to tell
How Santa don't like very well
To hear us children stomp an' yell.
Nor cousins, nor ist folks he knows
Like we know Millers, I suppose.

Old Mister Green—when he come here
W'y, was one day he shot a deer
Right where our house is! An' some bears!
An' he saw Indians ever'wheres!
I ast him was it lonesome nen
When he an' ist some other men

POOR OLD MISTER GREEN

Is all they is. He say somehow
It's not as lonesome as right now.

An' nen 'ere's somepin in his eye
'At look ist like he want to cry.
I say: "I wisht 'at, Christmas, you
Could play like I'm a go' to do."
An' he ist pat my head; nen he
Say: "No more Christmas times for me—
I'm all alone, you understand;
Th' rest is in th' Christmas Land."

An' nen he go on down th' street
A-walkin' slow, ist like his feet
Is tired; an' nen I heard him moan:
"It's Christmas—an' I'm all alone."
I ast my ma what does he mean,
An' she say: "Poor old Mister Green!"

SAMANTHA ANN

My sawdust heart is broken, and my china eyes are
sad—

This night has been the darkest that I ever, ever had;
The little girl who owns me used to tuck me in my
bed

And whisper that she loved me, while she covered
up my head

And told me to be careful not to kick the covers off,
For fear I might be croupy, or should catch the
whooping cough.

But yesterday a stranger came and took my cherished
place—

A waxen, flax haired stranger with a bright, un-
battered face.

The little girl who owns me let me drop upon the
floor

And hugged the stylish stranger, and has thought of
me no more;

And all last night, neglected, I have slept beside
the wall,

Unhappy and untidy, poor Samantha Ann—a doll.

SAMANTHA ANN

One year ago my fortune seemed to be serenely
bright—
The little girl would hold me in her arms from morn
till night;
She made me share her play with her, she tried to
make me eat,
She showed me to all callers—and they vowed that I
was sweet;
I had four sets of dresses, and a parasol, and fan,
And she would say that I was her beloved Samantha
Ann.

Alas! My dress is tattered—I've no other to put
on;
Half of my hair is missing, and my poor left arm
is gone;
And now the silk clad beauty that was smiling from
the tree
Has claimed all the attention which was once be-
stowed on me.
My sawdust heart is broken—I have slept against
the wall
Where she, with shouts of welcome for the other, let
me fall!

“PORE FOLKS ”

We're pore folks—porest on th' street—

An' I don't haf to mind my clo'es,

An' I'm th' first to have bare feet—

I got to do it, goodness knows!

Most times my pants is always tore

An' my hat never has no brim,

But it ain't that 'at makes me sore,

It's when folks say: “Don't play with him!”

They's other boys lives hereabouts;

I'm glad 'at I'm not like they are—

Their mas or some one always shouts:

“Now, Freddie, don't you go too far!”

An' when I come 'round where they're at

Some of 'em hollers: “Hello, Jim!”

Their mas, or some one, don't say “Scat!”

But they do say: “Don't play with him.”

Shucks! I don't care. I have more fun

An' any other boy you'll name.

They can't play with me—not a one—

You bet they want to, jest th' same.

One boy, he's slipped away an' played

With me, but only once or twice.

“PORE FOLKS”

He said one time, like he's afraid:

“I think 'at pore folks' boys is nice.”

We're pore folks—porest on th' street—

An' I don't have to wash my face

Unless ma does it, ner my feet,

Ner haf to stay in jest one place.

You bet when I grow up I'll say

To my boys: “Hustle out an' find

Whole heaps o' boys to come an' play—

Don't get none but th' porest kind!”

PAW'S INCONSISTENCY

Paw gets the funny papers, an' he reads 'em every
week,
An' laughs at all their pictures till sometimes he just
can't speak.
He'll snicker an' he'll chuckle, an' he'll show 'em to
my maw,
An' slap his leg an' holler they're the best he ever
saw!
But I don't see just why it is it gets me punishings,
Whenever I see any chance to do some funny things.

One time paw saw a picture of a funny little boy
What put a tack upon a chair—an' that filled paw
with joy.
An' so, I took a notion to do like that funny kid—
I put a tack upon a chair, an' paw sat down—he did!
Then for a day or two we had to eat things from a
shelf.
Why can't my paw see any joke in what I do, myself?

Another time there was a boy—a picture boy, I
mean—
What painted cats an' monkeys on the tablecloth so
clean.

PAW'S INCONSISTENCY

Well, paw, he laughed all day at that, an' so I went
an' got

Some paint an' fixed our table. Now I wish that
I had not!

Why is it, when I'm funny, paw he never laughs, but
spanks?

I try to entertain him but I don't get any thanks.

An' once there was a picture of a boy what fixed a
pail

Of water where his paw would step into it without fail
An' then go slidin' down the stairs with water in his
ears,

An' paw he laughed at that until he wiped away his
tears.

But when I fixed the bucket—— Well, I'd ruther skip
the rest.

Why should such funny antics make my paw call me
a pest?

One picture paw just howled at showed a boy what
had a gun

An' shot his father's legs all full of "buckshot num-
ber one."

I tried to show my parents that I was a humorist.

The doctor says paw will get well; an' paw he shakes
his fist.

I wish I could do something that would cause a lot
of joy.

I wish I wasn't nothing but a little picture boy!

WHEN WILLIE JOHNSON SWORE

Now—Willie Johnson, he lives 'cross
Th' alley fum our house, he does;
An' he ist claims 'at he's th' boss
An' baddest boy 'at ever wuz.
One day he clumb up on our fence
W'en me an' Authur Brown is there,
An' say: "You bet, if I commence
I'd show you fellows how to swear!"

Nen Authur double dared him to,
An' say: "You go ahead, 'cause we're
A sittin' wite here close to you
An' if you swear, w'y, we can hear."
But Willie Johnson say: "I would!
I'd swear wite here, this minute, 'cep'
I p'omised maw 'at I'd be good,
An' she's wite out on our back step.

Nen Authur Brown say: "Fraidycat!"
An' Willie Johnson say: "You see!
You fellows jump down where I'm at
An' keep wite still, an' follow me."
So we jump down, an' Willie starts
Wite down th' alley, clean to where



*"One day he clumb up on our fence
When me an' Arthur Brown is there."*

—WHEN WILLIE JOHNSON SWORE.



WHEN WILLIE JOHNSON SWORE

Old Mister Perkins keeps his carts
An' empty wagons standin' there.

Nen Authur say to go ahead,
An' Willie say: "I will, you bet!"
An' nen his face gets kindo' red
An' he say he ain't ready yet.
So—Authur calls him cow'rdycaff!
An' Willie look all 'round th' barn,
An' nen he choke an' nen he laff,
An' nen—yes, sir—he 'ist say—"Darn!"

Nen Willie Johnson gets as white
As he can get, an' turn an' run.
An' Authur Brown don't treat me wite.
He say: "You coaxed him! You're th' one!"
Nen I run home, an' I cry, too,
Till my maw gets me to con-fess.
She turn her face, 'at's what she do,
'Cause she is cryin', too—I guess!

THREE IN THE AFTERNOON

Just about three in the afternoon,
One of these early days in June,
A fellow will fall in a soft daydream
And look at the white, white clouds that gleam
Like sails that are drifting across the sky,
And, deaf to the city's toil-wearied cry,
Will dream till again as of old he sees
The wavering boughs of the drowsing trees.

Just about three—then the air grew still
And the brook breathed “Hush,” as it passed the mill,
And the bees loafed by through the mottled shade
Where the beams of the sun through the branches
 played,
And the wild rose glowed with the blush of June—
Just about three in the afternoon.

And somebody, somewhere far away,
Was singing a song that was like the day—
A lullaby-song, and the tones were dim,
And they floated by like an echoed hymn;
And you lay still, and you understood
That the world was glad and the world was good.

THREE IN THE AFTERNOON

And high in the sky like a pirate boat
Was a circling hawk, on its wings afloat;
And you would look up through the broken weaves
Of the green-blue fabric of sky and leaves—
And, sleepily musing, your soul would reach
The heights of a song all too sweet for speech—
Just about three in the afternoon
One of those early days in June.

THE WIND IN THE TREES

Sing, O wind that shakes the trees!
Weave for me your rhapsodies;
Catch the sunshine, and the blue
Of the sky's midsummer hue,
And the ivory that gleams
In each high white cloud that dreams
As it drifts across the breast
Of the sky, in lazy quest
Of some haven far and fair—
Weave me sun and sky and air
In your song that has no word,
But we know it, having heard.

Sing, O wind, sing soft and low,
While the boughs sway to and fro;
Sing the thousand drowsy croons
Of midsummer afternoons;
Catch, ballade and roundelay
That go pulsing through the day;
Fling your arms and blithely troll
Swinging strains that stir the soul,
Roaring chants that rise sublime—
Diapason bursts of rhyme,
Rhyme of air and cloud and sky
Born from your wild minstrelsy.

THE WIND IN THE TREES

Sing, then, sing; and let me see
The song billows shake the tree;
Shout and laugh, and shout again
Till the boughs are bent—and then
Melt into the minor bars
That you sing beneath the stars
When the fingertip of night
Quiets all the crimson light
That has swept in from the west,
Soothing the worn world to rest;
Whisper wistfully, and sigh
Your low, loving lullaby.

Sing, O wind among the trees;
Weave your endless rhapsodies.
Choral chants that leap and surge,
Mellow murmurs of a dirge.
Song and sob and laughter blent
When your fancy is unpent,
Let me marvel at it all—
Organ tone and trumpet call,
Wondrous notes that come on wings,
Echoes from Aeolian strings—
Let me listen on and on
Down the way your songs have gone.

THE WISDOM OF THE BOY

He knows what word the crickets pass
One to another in the grass;
The spider points to pasture lands
In quick response to his demands;
The ladybug spreads frightened wings
When come his warning whisperings;
And he can pitch in thrilling key
The war song of the bumblebee.

The varied pipings of the birds
Are plain to him as spoken words;
The odd sideglances of the jay
Are gestures coaxing him to play;
He knows what hour the swallows skim
Across the pond from rim to rim;
Knows where the drifting hawk is bound,
The while it circles round and round.

The world of fancy—best that is!
That wonder world is all of his,
For in his wood the elf and gnome
And sprite and goblin idly roam—
All this is true, for he has seen
Their forms dance down the aisles of green,

THE WISDOM OF THE BOY

And he has heard their catch and trill
When all the world about was still.

And he knows where the cloudships go
When they are beating to and fro,
And he knows what the trees have said
When each bent down its heavy head
As though the winds were high and strong—
The winds that bear to him a song.
Ah, this is wisdom undefiled,
The soulborn knowledge of the child,
The bookless learning, free and glad—
The wondrous lore that once we had.

THE BEAUTIFUL WOMEN

One woman went out on the way of shame
And the wide world marveled, and read her name.
And praised her beauty, and gaped and cheered
When, light and fluttering, she appeared.
But one little woman in hodden gray
Went out to the suffering, night and day—
And never for her was the trump of fame
And never a cheer as she went or came.

One woman went out on the path of lies—
And the whole wide world praised her lustrous eyes,
And paused and listened when she would speak,
And marked the roses that graced her cheek.
But one little woman in dingy black
Went down where the weary were on the rack
And carried the woes of the sad and lone,
And comforted many—and was unknown.

One woman set foot on the road of wrong—
They blazoned her deeds in a joyous song
That told of her daring, her charm, and wit,
And the world went humming and singing it.
But one little woman in homely gown
Went seeking for sorrow about the town,

THE BEAUTIFUL WOMAN

And smiles came to gladden where she found tears—
But never for her were the thrilling cheers.

But somewhere the record is fairly kept—
Unless at his task has the angel slept—
And, doubtless, there, when the warder reads
The beautiful tales of the golden deeds,
In shining letters will stand each name
Of these little women who had no fame
But who went patiently, day by day,
To do their work in the Master's way.

And farther than all of the outmost suns
Will ring the names of The Beautiful Ones.

APRIL

Ho, the wonder of it! Is the winter swept away?
Blown before the balsam breath from out the south
today?

Jewel-like, a blue bird gleams in circles far and high
Under all the wonder of the sapphire shining sky;
Down and down and down to us the lilting bird notes
fall—

Ho, the wonder of it when we hear the April call!

In a magic moment comes the waking of the brook,
And it runs to rouse the roots in meadow land and
nook,

Lingers laughingly awhile amid the tangled vine
That has loosed its hold upon the boughs it used to
twine;

Hurries on and flurries on, and echoes all along
All the mystic measures of the murmured April song.

Earth and sky have heard it; it has swept across the
night,

Touching all the little stars with new and gladder
light,

Softening the depths of space until in them appear
All the subtle glories of the morning of the year;

APRIL

Dead and dull and dark before, and dismal overmuch,
Now the sky of night is answering to April's touch.

Ho, the marvel of it! April's feet upon the hills
Find the olden pathway to the valleys and the rills;
Now the sunshine shimmers in the distance of the day
And the wintry veil of mist is rent and blown away.
Morning songs are singing in the happy hearts of all—
Ho, the music of it when we hear the April call!

MR. UNKNOWN

Great kings sit brooding on their thrones,
While unforeseen rebellion comes,
And through their castles surge the tones
Of shouts blent with defiant drums—
But these great kings are not alone
With visions of a somber hue;
The man who leads his life unknown.
He has his weighty troubles, too.

The unknown man—the grain of dust
Upon the highway known as life—
He suffers, too, in broken trust,
He meets defeat in petty strife.
And little things will grind his heart,
And line his face with marks of care;
He, too, must walk his way apart,
With all the woe he has to bear.

The world heeds not his little frets,
No states wait, wondering, for him
To end his fight with foes or debts,
Nor marvel at his courage grim.
For him no long and wondrous halls,
For him no high and massive throne,

MR. UNKNOWN

But in the compass of his walls
He and his fears remain unknown.

None bruits his miseries abroad,
Nor flings his gloom from sea to sea;
Not one in all the world is awed
By the small griefs of such as he;
Yet in their way his sorrows crush—
His sorrows and each petty thing
Are just as great as those that hush
The gracious laughter of a king.

HE NEVER TOLD HIS TROUBLES

In summer time the heat might be
The kind that forces you and me
To tell how "yesterday at noon
It seemed as if a man would swoon!"
In the winter time the bitter cold
Might grip his nose and ears, and hold
His fingers, too, but like a saint
He never even made complaint—
He never told his troubles.

His business went all awry;
His fondest hopes were knocked sky high;
Competitors got all his trade,
He lost what little he had made;
But though neck deep in pressing debts
And other sorts of fears and frets
With creditors about to sue,
He never seemed the least bit blue—
He never told his troubles.

Deprived of all his hard earned wealth,
Next came the failing of his health,
And what he suffered none can say,
For though in misery each day,

HE NEVER TOLD HIS TROUBLES

With all his doctoring in vain,
Unable to get on his feet
Or to enjoy what he might eat,
He never told his troubles.

Today he sleeps his last long sleep
Where drooping willows sadly weep,
But, O, the sunshine seems to love
To send its gold down from above,
And with its rare effulgence limn
The stone erected over him,
A wondrous epitaph, indeed,
Is this which many come to read:

“HE NEVER TOLD
HIS TROUBLES!”

SUNDOWN ROAD

White and smooth, serene and still,
All unbroken by a hill,
Down and down with gentle sweep,
To the quiet House of Sleep;
Skirted by the drowsy streams,
Whispering the song of dreams,
Past the fields with poppies sowed,
Goes the Sundown Road.

Leading down into the west,
Where the breezes sing of rest,
Where the kindly trees have made
Gray retreats of peace and shade;
Where the sounds of afternoon
Blend and blur into a croon,
Where the crickets chant their ode,
Goes the Sundown Road.

And they come from house and hall,
Man and maid, and children—all
Lured along the drowsy way,
Outward from the world of day,
Soothed by low-toned lullabies
In the sweetest of all keys,

SUNDOWN ROAD

Where no haunting fears forebode—
Down the Sunset Road.

From the countryside and town,
One and all they journey down,
To the sleepy song that sings
In the very heart of things.
Ho, the rosy road of rest
Is of all the roads the best,
Where the shadows bend and bless
Us with all their gentleness!
And the shoulders lose their load
On the Sundown Road.

THE HARVESTER

Against the sunset's purple glow he stands
As though a statue formed of ruddy bronze,
A warder of the golden harvest lands
That show the silent labor of the dawns
And noons and nights, and magic of the sun,
And alchemy of wind and cloud and rain—
And through the sea of wheat the billows run
Like endless waves that sweep across the main.

The harvester with bared head stands and sees
The nodding grain that waits the morrow's toil,
The waving wheat that lifts above his knees,
The heavy grain his labor has for spoil;
And from the haze that hangs above the height
Come subtle whispers from the far off lands,
That bring a murmured message, low and light,
Which tells they wait the labor of his hands.

His is a greatness wrested not in war,
A dignity but yet half understood—
Not serf, but all the nations' servitor,
He looks upon his work, and it is good.
Out on the wheat his lengthened shadow slants,
A simile of labor's shielding worth,

THE HARVESTER

And to his ears there come the crooning chants
That with the coming night are given birth.

The sunset flings its last red banners high
And still he stands, as statues stand and brood,
A silhouette against the blazing sky—
A man in well done toil's uplifting mood..
And then the night lets fall its dusky shroud
With wondrous jewelings of star on star—
A royal robe for him, the swarthy browed,
Who spends his strength for peoples near and far.

MIDSUMMER DAYDREAM

I know where there's a hill
Where the brook makes a bend
To go down to the mill,
And the meadowlands end
And the forest trees rise
With the shadows between
That are glad to one's eyes
And are soothingly green.

And you look far away
From the hilltop, and see
How the breezes all stray
Past the hawberry tree
That is deep in the wheat,
And go whispering low
In the glimmer of heat
Where the red poppies grow.

And the butterflies lag
Near the vines on the ground,
And the bumblebees brag
Of the sweets they have found;
And the clouds sail along
In the sea of the sky,

MIDSUMMER DAYDREAM

And the lark trills a song
And the thrush makes reply.

Miles away, so it seems,
Are the spires of the town—
But the shade holds our dreams
Where the light shuttles down;
And there is not a sigh,
And there is not a care,
And the hilltop is high—
And I want to go there.

CHILD VISIONS

What do little children see
When their eyes look far away
And their fancies seem to be
In some long lost yesterday?
Ah, their eyes, all crystal clear,
Look into the vast beyond
With the rapt gaze of a seer
Finding days that long have dawned.

What do little children see
When a-sudden in their play
They forget the things that be
And gaze far and far away?

What do little children know
That they dream and look out thus?
What road do their fancies go
That is closed and barred to us?
Do they see the pleasant trees
In some other, hidden land,
Hear the songs of birds and bees—
Songs they, only, understand?

CHILD VISIONS

What do little children know?
Do their younger souls divine
Where lies all the golden glow
That one day was yours and mine?

What do little children find
When they subtly draw apart
On the path the older mind
May not trace, with all its art?
Dimpled hand on dimpled cheek,
Eyes in wondrous vision wide—
Do the little souls then seek
Places that our long years hide?

What do little children find
When their eyes look far and far?
Who of us has yet divined
Where the thoughts of children are?

THE LITTLE BAD BOY

The bad little boy has gone to sleep,
One hand still shut in a stubborn fist,
As though in his dreams he would boldly keep
Himself in position to resist.
The bad little boy throughout the day
Has broken the home rules, one by one,
Has found for his feet the forbidden way,
Has left no disturbing thing undone.

The bad little boy—his face is calm,
Save that a faint smile is clinging there;
And now a forgiving, gentle palm
Smooths all of the tangles from his hair;
And now he is lifted into place
By arms unfelt in his slumbers deep;
And nothing but good shows in his face—
The bad little boy has gone to sleep.

O, all of his pranks and vexing ways
And all of his mischief is forgot
When down through the vale of dreams he strays;
And all the reproof that once was hot
Dies out with the sigh that swells the heart
When softly we bend over him and kiss

THE LITTLE BAD BOY

His cheek—and we swiftly thrust apart
His deeds of the day, when he sleeps like this.

So, may it not be, when you and I
As bad little boys lie down in sleep,
The angel that marks our deeds on high
May come on his wings of gentle sweep
And bend over us with a patient sigh,
When all of our blind rebellions cease—
And whisper to such as are you and I;
“Your day is forgiven you; sleep in peace?”

THE LITTLE THINGS

I see them all about me, the little things undone—
The wagon that I promised to fix so it would run,
The doll, the drum, the trumpet, are scattered here
 and there;
I promised I would take them when I'd the time to
 spare.

And he—he was so patient; more so than I could be,
Nor minded when I tumbled the trinkets from my
 knee,
But went out softly singing, as do blithe little boys,
To wondrous make-believing with all his broken toys.

I call him in a whisper that trembles to a sigh;
I call him in a whisper—but wait for no reply;
And then, as at an altar, before the toys I bow
And touch with fumbling fingers—I'm not too busy
 now.

Ah, now my hands are idle; my heart is idle, too—
It does not thrill in cadence with all the laughs I
 knew.
I count the broken treasures he asked me to make
 whole.

THE LITTLE THINGS

And count the niggard minutes I gave him as his
dole.

But I shall leave them broken, these toys that still
are his,

And he must hear my whisper in what fair place
he is.

* * * * *

I wonder if in heaven they will not let me do
The little things—the little things I did not do for
you!

SNOW PICTURES

As thick as Vallombrosa's leaves
The snow comes swirling; and it weaves
White draperies in which we trace
The milky foaminess of lace,
And see, alert and tremulous,
The snow sprites kiss their hands to us.

The snow sprites leap and danced and sail,
And merrily they draw a veil
Before the gloomy, naked trees
That frown upon such revelries;
Then swiftly, madly, hand in hand
They trip their silent saraband.

Then, with a magic wondrous strange
The picture has a sweeping change.
Here is a plain—a wintry waste
Where neither trees nor hills are traced;
And rhythmically clear there come
Dull beats upon a sodden drum.

And, shuffling, shuffling, soldierwise
Go files of men whose weary eyes

SNOW PICTURES

Look on and on, and see no end
Of this wide path to which they bend,
While limbs grow stiff and faces wan,
They shuffle, shuffle, on and on.

A picture strange—a picture weird!
Worn men with snow flecked hair and beard;
A flag that holds a filmy wreath—
A stainless, clinging, snowy sheath;
And guns that noiselessly roll by
Into the white, earth touching sky.

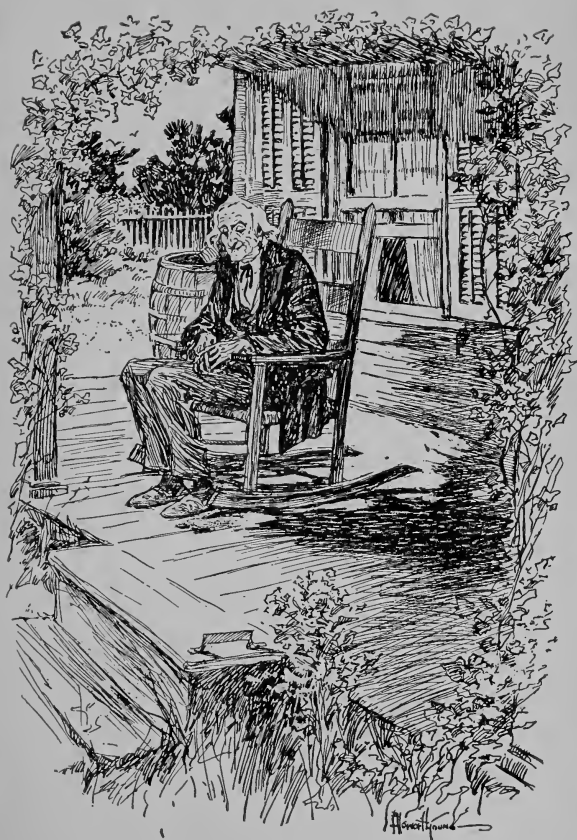
And now the snow sweeps in again
And blots out flag and guns and men.
Again the snow sprites pirouette
Through saraband and minuet.
As thick as Vallombrosa's leaves
The snow—and thus it winds and weaves.

HIS SHADDER

Eighty year, I am, an' past—
Nothin' much that I can do
'Cept remember who was who,
What they did, an' when an' how,
An' just talk like I do now
Of the things that use' to be
An' the things I'd hear an' see;
Friends I've had—an' I suppose
Like all men I've had my foes.
Eighty year—an' they go fast.
Just got one thing left at last—
My shadder.

Ever think o' that? It stays
Right clos't to you all your days;
You may scheme an' tax your wit—
You can't get away from it!
An' I tell you, as for me
There's no better thing to see
Than your shadder, day by day,
Stayin' with you on your way.

Not the shadder that it was—
Shadders change as humans does.
First I mind of it at all
Was one time in airy fall—
Me a younker on the farm,



*"An' I can't say, but I guess
'Twas her shadder whispered 'Yes!'"*

—HIS SHADDER.



HIS SHADDER

Wilder than a fire alarm!
W'y, I mind the very day:
Sun set red—you know the way—
An' I noticed how it made
My boy shadder seem to wade
Through the grass until it got
Clean acrost the pasture lot.

Shadders always shrinks at noon,
But at night—One time the moon
Made my shadder help me out
When my mind was full o' doubt
An' my heart was in a whirl
All because o'—well, a girl!
My shy shadder walked by hers—
Shadders knows what they p'fers!
An' I can't say, but I guess
'Twas her shadder whispered "Yes."

So it's been—an' now I've got
Where I like a sunny spot
To sit in, an' dream, an' see
My old shadder mockin' me!
See it nod an' shake its head
Like it said the things I said,
Like it was made by the glow
Of the sun o' long ago.
Who'd 'a' thought that it would be
All that would be left for me?

My shadder.

THE AVERAGE MAN

The average man is the man of the mill,
The man of the valley, or man of the hill,
The man at the throttle, the man at the plow—
The man with the sweat of his toil on his brow,
Who brings into being the dreams of the few,
Who works for himself, and for me, and for you.
There is not a purpose, a project, or plan
But rests on the strength of the average man.

The growth of a city, the might of a land
Depend on the fruit of the toil of his hand;
The road, or the wall, or the mill, or the mart,
Call daily to him that he furnish his part;
The pride of the great, and the hope of the low,
The toll of the tide as it ebbs to and fro,
The reach of the rails and the countries they span,
Tell what is the trust in the average man.

The man who, perchance, thinks he labors alone—
The man who stands out between hovel and throne,
The man who gives freely his brain and his brawn
Is the man that the world has been builded upon.
The clang of the hammer, the sweep of the saw,

THE AVERAGE MAN

The flash of the forge—they have strengthened the
law,
They have rebuilt the realms that the wars overran,
They have shown us the worth of the average man.

So here's to the average man—to the one
Who has labored unknown on the tasks he has done,
Who has met as they came all the problems of life,
Who has helped us to win in the stress and the strife.
He has bent to his toil, thinking neither of fame
Nor of tribute, nor honor, nor prize, nor acclaim—
In the forefront of progress, since progress began—
Here's a health and a hail to the average man!

THE TRAMP

I am a knight of an olden order,
I am a son of an ancient line;
You hedge your land with a barring border—
Never a land that may not be mine.
Others are slaves of the sword or sabre,
Others are bound to their thatched abode,
Others are liege to the lords of labor—
I am a Knight of the Open Road.

What of the day, or the coming morrow?
They may go drown in the tideless past.
I have my choice—I may beg or borrow;
I have my way—I may feast or fast.
Is it your world? Ho, the world is roomy!
You and your toil have their slavish place.
I know the debt that is ever due me
And I demand with a smiling face.

Mine is the blood of forgotten strayers;
Mine is the soul of the great unrest—
Soldiers and sailors, strolling players—
Men who know neither east nor west.
You are the blind who provoke my laughter,
Stumbling about in your chosen towns,

THE TRAMP

Hugging the shade of your slanting rafter,
Viewing my kind with your damning frowns.

What do you know of the ceaseless calling?

What do you know of the luring trail?

What do you know of the long road falling

Down from the hill to the singing dale?

What do you know of the night's blue curtain,

Swung in the sky for the sleeper's tent?

What of the world? All your thoughts uncertain

Die in the walls where your life is pent.

I am a knight of an olden order—

Bred of the race that of old went forth,
Careless of land and of line and border,

Footing it east, west, south, and north.

Stoop to the strokes of the lash of labor,

Bend your backs to the galling load—

I have the whole wide world for neighbor;

I am a Knight of the Open Road!

THE EVENING LAMP

When shadows come a-tremble from the west
Blent with the splendor of the sunset gleams
And all the world is hushing into rest
And turning down the quiet path of dreams,
Then flashing on the frontiers of the night
Through city streets, and farms, and far-off camps,
Come one by one the peaceful points of light—
The golden glow of all the evening lamps.

Flung round the world in endless, stately pace,
The cordons of the evening lamps are set
In kingly hall, in mean and lowly place,
As beacons flaring from a parapet
So do the twilight lamps blaze in the dusk—
Though it be winter time of close wrapped chill
Or summer with its tang of mint and musk
That freights the breezes drifting from the hill.

The evening lamp! What hale and hearty cheer
Its soothing radiance speaks to the one
Who sees its welcome glow as he draws near
The home place when the weary day is done!
What fair songs it has made; what musings sweet
The memory of it has brought to those

THE EVENING LAMP

Who trudged through alien lands on laggard feet
And mused of it when day came to a close!

Low in the east the first great star of night
Sweeps up and up as onward speeds the shade,
And timed with it there comes the mellow light
In hut or house, in cot or palace made.
Of all fair lights that glad the hearts of men,
Of all fair lights that glimmer near or far,
Across the mountains, through the vale and glen,
The evening lamplight mocks the evening star.

TOGETHER

We who grow old together,
Who wander hand in hand
Through fair and glooming weather,
By mountain side and strand,
We who share pain and pleasure,
Who share both shade and sun,
We have life's fullest measure
When all is done.

The olden songs and stories—
It is to them we cling;
The olden golden glories
Successive sunsets fling;
Our handclasps grow the stronger
While we walk through the years;
Our joy is but the longer
For all our tears.

For us is ever glowing
The ruby of the rose—
The echoed summer showing
Across the drift of snows;
As ashes and as ember
Tell of the cheering blaze,
So we old folk remember
The wealth of days.

TOGETHER

We who share all our dreamings
Of gladness we knew then
Know that in fancy's gleamings
Each good hour lives again;
We who face one tomorrow
Know that anear us stays
A sheaf whence we may borrow
Our yesterdays.

We who grow old together—
We have so much to share
Of calm and lusty weather,
Of clouded days and fair;
The sunset shade grows fleeter,
The twilight has begun,
But life has been the sweeter
When all is done.

LINCOLN

We mark the lowly place where he was born,
We try to dream the dreams that starred his nights
When the rude path that ran beside the corn
Grew to a fair broad way which found the heights;
We try to sense the lonely days he knew,
The silences that wrapped about his soul
When there came whispers tremulous and true
Which urged him up and onward to his goal.

His was the dream-filled world of kindly trees;
And marvel reaches of the prairie lands;
The brotherhood of fields, and birds, and bees,
Which magnifies the soul that understands;
His was the school of unremitting toil
Whose lessons leave an impress strong and deep;
His were the thoughts of one close to the soil,
The knowledge of the ones who sow and reap.

And of all this, and from all this, he rose
Full panoplied, when came his country's call,
Strong-hearted, and strong-framed to bear the woes
Which fell on him the bitterest of all.
And well he wrought, and wisely well he knew
The strain and stress that should be his alone;

LINCOLN

He did the task long set for him to do—

This man who came unfavored and unknown.

We look today, not through Grief's mist of tears,

Not through glamour of nearness to the great,

But down the long, long corridor of years

Where stand the sentinels of Fame and Fate,

And now we see him, whom men called uncouth,

Grown wondrous fair beneath the hand of Time,

And know the love of liberty and truth

Brings immortality, and makes sublime.

But, O, this rugged face with kindly eyes

Wherein a haunting sorrow ever stays!

Somehow it seems that through the sorrow rise

The echoed visions of his other days,

That still we may in subtle fancy trace

The light that led him with prophetic gleams—

That here we gaze upon the pictured face

Of one who was a boy that lived his dreams!

THE GEM

Held in the hollow of your hand
It flames with unconsuming fire ;
Strange lights you do not understand
Play in its heart and never tire ;
Now luminous with silver white,
Then fainting into shifting hues
And wondrous tintings shot with light—
A glory that it cannot lose.

What is it? Hidden in the earth
Through unknown centuries it slept
And still the secret of its birth
In the unfathomed past is kept.
A toy to please a pagan's eyes,
A gaud to deck a diadem—
Deep in its heart forever lies
The glow which makes of it a gem.

Mayhap a thousand thousand years
Are echoed in the light it gives—
The subtle light which shifts, and veers,
And lurks, and leaps, and laughs, and lives ;
But whence came its immortal fire
That neither burns, nor sears, nor chars—
Caught from the sunset's funeral pyre
And from the dream light of the stars?

THE GEM

It is enough to know that here
In this small space are caught and pent
The summer suns of year on year,
With all the fairest colors blent.
The charm of roses in the dew,
The glint of distant hills of green,
And outspread silent skies of blue
Are in this time old jewel seen.

I like to think that every smile
And every kindly word and song
Are treasured for some far off while,
Blent with a purpose sweet and strong
Until deep in the centuries
Mankind still has the joy of them
As now some age forgotten frees
Its radiant sunlight in this gem.

THE ANGEL

Carve me an angel, sculptor, and let your stone be
white,

So white that it will shimmer, reflecting back the
light—

Give it a semblance, sculptor—a form and shape like
this:

A lassie wee and drowsy, who gives a good night kiss,
Too weary from all her playing to open her lips to
speak—

And carve the chubby fingers that touch her mother's
cheek;

Ah, and she needs no halo—simply a wayward curl;
That is an angel, sculptor—somebody's little girl.

What for an angel, sculptor? Get you your marble
fine,

Carve it with patient purpose, coax it to curve and
line;

Drape it with flowing garments, give it the simple
charms—

Carve us a mother holding her baby in her arms,
Wonderful, tender, hopeful, sweet she must be and
wise

And with the light of heaven glimmering in her eyes.

THE ANGEL

That is an angel, sculptor—see that you carve it sure,
Showing the love that surges out from a soul all pure.

Carve me an angel, sculptor. Carve us a woman, old,
And grave in all the wrinkles her withered cheeks
must hold—

Wrinkles that tell of sorrow, lines that the laughs
have left;

Give her the knotted fingers no longer quick and deft,
Bend her with stress of toiling, bow her with weight
of years,

Show us the golden beauty wrought of her smiles
and tears,

Tell in the stone the story, how she is wan and worn
Through all her self-denial for the ones that she has
borne.

That is an angel, sculptor. Grave it, and carve it so,
And all the world will see it—see it, and bow, and
know.

HOW DO YOU WEAR IT?

Religion? Yes? Every Sunday you,
In a certain church and a certain pew,
With a solemn face and with earnest eyes
Hear the preacher tell about paradise—
And you think great thoughts while the anthems roll,
And you feel a grace in your inward soul.
Religion? Yes? Is it something that
Goes with long frock coat and with high silk hat?
On the six week days is your conscience mute?
Do you put it on with your Sunday suit?

Of course one knows that on Sabbath day
He must put the wiles of the world away,
And must view all folk with a kindly scan,
And must have some thought of his brother man—
For the stores are closed, and the banks are shut;
It is through the week the coupons are cut;
It is through the week that we grub for pelf
And the man who works has to think of self—
But religion? Ah, when the day is here
Do you put it on with your Sunday gear?

Do you take it down from a wardrobe hook,
From a sheltered place in a quiet nook?
Do you keep it nice, while the week goes through,

HOW DO YOU WEAR IT?

Till on Sunday morn it looks neat and new,
And no one who sees you would ever guess
You would wear such a garb to your business?
Has it neither wrinkle nor speck of dust,
Nor a hidden patch, nor a trace of rust?
Do you keep it spick, and serene, and fair—
Do you put it on with your Sunday wear?

Do you keep it free from your Monday scowl,
From your Tuesday rush, and your Wednesday growl,
From your Thursday sneer, and your Friday frown,
And the Saturday scheme that you work downtown?
Your religion? Yes? Can't you make it mix
With the Sabbath day and the other six
Do you carry it through the dust and mire,
Or assume its grace 'neath the high church spire?
On the six week days is your conscience mute—
Do you put it on with your Sunday suit?

THE DEVIL'S TATTOO

The devil's tattoo is a singular air—
You tap out the tune on the arm of a chair,
Or beat out its bars and its measures grotesque
While nervously eyeing the top of a desk;
Or finger the chords of its endless refrain
When glum at your window you tap on the pane—
And these are the words of the devil's tattoo:
“There's nothing, there's nothing whatever to do—
 So what can I do?
 There's nothing to do—
There's nothing, there's nothing whatever to do.”

Unconsciously, when you are down on your luck,
The opening measures are sure to be struck—
You think, when too late, if you only had known
How affairs were to turn you would not have been
 thrown.

Then light on the table you start the tattoo:
“There's nothing, there's nothing whatever to do—
 The truth isn't true;
 The world is deep blue—
There's nothing, there's nothing a fellow can do.”

The devil's tattoo is the roll of a drum
That summons the army of weakness to come,

THE DEVIL'S TATTOO

And get you to timing the rhythmical beat
And march with it down the long road of defeat.
You think you have lost, when you yield to its chime;
You think you have fallen—you need but to climb,
To clench up your fists and to fight your way through.
Forgetting the words of the devil's tattoo:

“There's nothing, there's nothing whatever to do.

There's nothing to do—

So what can I do?

There's nothing, there's nothing a fellow can do.”

WITH NO MORAL

Young fellow, I want to hold speech with you—
But never a word of the things you do,
And never a word of the ways you walk,
Nor the hours you keep, nor the way you talk,
For I know that a man is called undergrown
If his wild, wild oats are as yet unsown.
But I wondered if somewhere, away from here,
Somebody—a woman—I know it's queer;
I wondered if she doesn't bend and sigh
O'er a picture of you in the days gone by.

O, certainly not. I've no mind to preach,
And no creed to give, and no rules to teach.
I was thinking, that's all, as I watched your face,
And I thought that somehow I could faintly trace
The path where the dimples played hide and seek
When you were a toddler—there, in your cheek.
And I wondered, that's all, as a man will do,
Who cherished the picture she kept of you.

You'll pardon me, surely? It's not for me
To hinder your pleasures. A man is free
To come and to go as he likes; and, yes,
To act as he pleases. That's right, I guess.

WITH NO MORAL

It's simply a fancy, because you are
A stranger to me. And I wouldn't mar
A moment of yours. But, whose fingers hold
The picture they took when your locks were gold?

When you were a toddler! Your picture, then,
Before you set foot on the path of men.
I simply was wondering who would—Well,
Who treasures your picture, and loves to tell
The tales of your wonderful boyhood years?
And maybe she kisses it, while her tears
Come clouding the sunlight that's in her smiles
At thinking of all of the baby whiles.
And the measuring mark that she made on the wall—
But then, it is not my concern, at all.

RUBAIYAT OF O. LAZYMÁN

I

Wake! For the sun has scattered into flight
The stars that flecked the freckle-face of night,
 And incense-breathing morn is here again.
Yet, oh, to sleep some more is my delight!

II

The loud alarum rings above my head
And thrills the atmosphere about my bed.
 Ah, had I but the making of all things,
Ere yet the man had made it he were dead!

III

“Arise! The health-food on the table steams!”
A voice adown the hallway rends my dreams,
 And through the casement float the sounds of
 feet
Of men who hurry on to work their schemes.

IV

Outside I hear my neighbor's growling pup,
Below there is the clink of dish and cup—
 Ah, what a sorry scheme of life it is
That all things thus conspire to wake me up!

V

Methinks the Seven Sleepers, when all's said,
Were men who to the joys of sleep were bred—
 Who knew the gracious pillow at its best,
And loved the luring ease of morning bed.

VI

And when the last awak'ner slow shall creep
To rouse the slumb'ring ones on land and deep,
 May he have feeling for my morning nap,
And say: "How he enjoys it! Let him sleep!"

BETWIXT AND BETWEEN

I am not prone to idleness; I do not want to shirk;
I wish that I might know just how and where to go
to work—

I long to show the waiting world that I am rich in
merit,

But still I cannot quite decide what traits I must
inherit;

Two thrilling calls forever surge and whisper unto me,
And one of them is from the land, the other from
the sea.

And so of mixed heredity I am a sad bewailer
Since Adam was a farmer and old Noah was a sailor.

Sometimes when Adam's influence is strong I am in-
clined

To hold the plow and till the soil—and then I change
my mind,

For Noah's blood is in my veins and that gives me
the notion

That I should brave the biting gales that blow upon
the ocean;

O, shall it be a sulky plow or ship that I shall ride?
I've pondered it these many years and still cannot
decide.

BETWIXT AND BETWEEN

At sea I'd be a jolly tar, on land perhaps a tailor—
But Adam was a farmer and old Noah was a sailor.

My relatives and friends at times think they'll take
me to task—

“Why don't you get a move on you?” in meaning
tones they ask,

And then I must explain to them—it causes lots of
bother—

That I don't know if Noah or old Ad. was my fore-
father,

Whereat they sniff and sometimes sneer and almost
make me sob

By hinting that they think it's time I go and get a
job!

O, land or sea? What must I be? A jailor or a
whaler—

Since Adam was a farmer and old Noah was a sailor?

HIS RAVING

It was on a morning sunny when I thought to spend
some money

For some incidental matters in a big department
store.

So with attitude inquiring I outlined my dim desiring
To a person awe inspiring who stood near the open
door.

“Eight aisles down, and then,” he shouted, “seek
the counter near the door—

Near the elevator door.”

Ah, distinctly I recall it—really he’d no need to bawl
it

As the captain of an army bawled commands in days
of yore,

With his swordlike finger showing me the way I
should be going,

Nor to come behind, tiptoeing from his post beside
the door,

“Eight aisles down,” the words repeating, “then the
counter near the door”—

Bowing neatly as before.

In a moment I’d have sauced him—but that moment
I had lost him

HIS RAVING

For a wave of women tossed him to his post beside
the door,

And I with that wave was merging, with that wave
so madly surging

In a current swiftly verging down the center of the
store.

Then I tried to count the counters as the wave of
women bore

Me, a bubble, through the store.

Presently I grew affrighted, but a friendly face I
sighted;

“Miss,” said I, “or Madam, truly your forgiveness
I implore,

But the fact is I was looking for some things to use
in cooking—

If your anger I am brooking I am sorry, as before—

But if you’ll just give me leeway”—As the waves
break on the shore

I was jammed across the floor.

Then they all began to trample on my toes to get a
sample

Of the goods that made the garments that a waxen
dummy wore,

And I cursed in Greek and Latin while they called
for silk and satin,

Women thin and women fat in one tremendous rush
and roar.

HIS RAVING

“Eight or eighty aisles,” I muttered, “I am getting very sore.

Let me only find the door.”

To the door at last they threw me—and I feared they might pursue me,

But they swarmed about the counters, looking patterns o’er and o’er.

Then that floorman so beguiling once more murmured to me, smiling,

“Did you find”—Ah, this was riling!—“find the counter near the door?”

Then I turned and shouted: “No sir!” and I hastened through the door

To go shopping nevermore.

DANIEL WEBSTER FRANKLIN GREEN

When Daniel Webster Franklin Green went to the
legislature
He vowed that all the walls of fame should bear his
nomenclature,
That down the vista of the years, far as the future
reaches,
Should pour the torrent of the cheers roused by his
burning speeches,
That from the limbs of shackled ones his hand should
take the fetters
And that his fame should be inscribed in never fading
letters .
A pleasingly majestic mien
Had Daniel Webster Franklin Green.

He drafted bills—to benefit us all was his intention—
A bill to crush the wicked trusts is one that we may
mention ;
Another one to regulate the railway rates he fathered ;
A dozen others he got up—however, he was bothered
Because his work was not received with public acclamation,
Because with all of this he did not get a reputation.
“Too much to higher thought I lean,”
Mused Daniel Webster Franklin Green.

DANIEL WEBSTER FRANKLIN GREEN

Whereat and whereupon he sat him down and
drafted measures
Providing that the plutocrats should parcel out their
treasures,
Providing that all bachelors should pay for being
single,
Providing that society with hoi polloi should mingle,
Providing that the price of eggs should be a dime a
dozen,
Providing that a man could wed his uncle's second
cousin—

“I guess your Uncle Dan is keen,”
Smiled Daniel Webster Franklin Green.

He saw this was the proper course, and while he
thought upon it
He drew a bill prohibiting the high priced Easter
bonnet.
In geometric ratio his fame grew all the greater
And people whispered as he passed: “The wondrous
legislator!”
He grew in girth, he rose in worth, beyond all our
conjecture
And now the hall is packed each time they bill him
for a lecture,
And in each leading magazine
Shines Daniel Webster Franklin Green.

JAKE AND JOE

Of all the people that I know
There are no two like Jake and Joe.
Now, Joe, since he was quite a youth
Has been—well, he would stretch the truth;
Not lie, exactly, but when he
Would see some one, say you or me,
He'd stop and smile and wave his hand
And cry:—"Old man, you're lookin' grand!"
It's just his way.

Jake is the other way about—
Somehow, he always seems to doubt
The realness of the things he sees;
That is, he pretty near agrees
With you if you say you feel well,
"But then," he'll say, "a man can't tell
He may think that he feels all right,
But finds his deathbed ere the night!"
It's just his way.

But Joe, for instance, never frets;
His talk is slangy with "You bets!"
Why, each and everything he does
Is just the best that ever was,

JAKE AND JOE

To hear him tell it. Man alive,
His dollar always sounds like five!
Each fish he catches cannot fail,
When he explains, to be a whale.
It's just his way.

Jake's horse might have a faster gait;
Joe's horse can win with double weight;
Jake, in the dark, will fret and scowl;
Joe swears that he sees like an owl;
Jake's house is cramped and still with gloom;
Joe makes a palace of one room;
Jake's apple always has a blight;
Joe finds a ripe spot he can bite—
It's just his way.

Jake with the "rheumatiz" will yell;
Joe has it, but he's "getting well!"
Jake's so inclined to doubt and scoff
That all his joy is one-half off,
But Joe—well, he don't lie, you know,
But everything is more than so;
His glowing gift of fancy's such,
That his fun is ten times as much—
It's just his way.

FASHION NOTES

The bonnet she bought at a bargain last spring
Is really still a most beautiful thing;
The ribbons are clean and the flowers are bright,
But she wouldn't wear it—she'd look like a fright.
The bonnet would last for a very long while;
Its perfectly good—

But it isn't in style.

The dresses she has are as good as when new;
They do not show wear, as such things often do;
There's never a rip nor a stain on the goods—
But she wouldn't wear them and live in the woods!
She says, with a sorry attempt at a smile:
“They are perfectly good—

But they're all out of style.”

Her furniture 's gone to the second hand man;
Her pictures have also gone under the ban;
The rugs on the floors and the tints on the walls
Must change, for the edict of fashion now falls.
They clutter the walk, a disconsolate pile;
They're perfectly good—

But they've gone out of style.

FASHION NOTES

Her husband—poor man!—she is not seen with him.
It was hard to decide, but her duty was grim.
She had no complaint of his manner of life,
And he seemed most proud of his excellent wife—
He had not a trace of deceit or of guile;
He was perfectly good—

But he wasn't in style.

AND SO 4TH

The glorious Fourth was dawning fast
When down the dim back stairs there passed
A boy who heard with fretful air
His mother call: "Now, you take care,"
And so 4th.

A cracker made of dynamite
He took, and set the fuse alight,
It went off with a rousing roar
And nearly all the neighbors swore—
And so 4th.

Until the breakfast bell had pealed
The backyard was a battlefield
If one might judge by all the sound
That filled the air and shook the ground,
And so 4th.

He ate, and hurried out again;
He got some more firecrackers then
And shot them under upturned pails
And fastened them to stray dogs' tails,
And so 4th.

AND SO 4TH

He kept this up till dewy eve;
He burned his hat, his pants, and sleeve;
He frightened unsuspecting folks.
By some half anarchistic jokes,
And so 4th.

When dark came on, this reckless boy
Touched Roman candles off with joy.
The firemen soon ran up to douse
The burning gable of the house,
And so 4th.

At last there came a frightened shout—
He thought a rocket had gone out;
He said: "I'll just see if it is;"
He looked; the rocket gave a whiz,
And so 4th.

There was a sizzle and a bang;
The ambulance came with a clang;
The doctor came and whispered low;
The mother said: "I told you so,"
And so 4th.

The boy went riding in a hearse;
His gravestone bears a touching verse
Which tells how he was called away
Upon one sad and solemn day—
And so 4th.

LINES TO A BALD SPOT

When first you capped my thoughtful dome,
Ere yet you made yourself at home,
My friends would look at you and grin:
"Old man, your hair is getting thin."
At first I mused on you with dread—
Now spread, blame you, spread!

I soaked you in expensive oil;
My scalp I farmed as though 'twere soil;
I plowed it with a rasping comb,
My brush in harrow style would roam
Across you. Still more hair I shed—
Now spread, blame you, spread!

Germs, microbes, and bacilli, too,
I killed, and still the bare space grew.
Of tonic I have used a tub;
Each day I used to rub and rub,
By hirsute aspiration led—
Now spread, blame you, spread!

Electric shocks and summer sun
Have failed to put you on the run;
Once, to deceive me, you let hair
Peep forth, and waste and wither there,

LINES TO A BALD SPOT

But like a vapor soon it sped—
Now spread, blame you, spread!

Grow larger yet, grow far and wide—
I shall not train my locks to hide
Your bare and glistening expanse;
You have led me too long a dance!
So do your worst with my poor head—
Now spread, blame you, spread!

RUNNING NO RISK

“Indeed,” she told the druggist’s clerk, “I don’t know what to do—

These patent remedies hold risks of which I never knew;

This week I’ve read of lots of them and find that alcohol

Is made the base—how terrible!—of nearly each and all.”

The druggist’s clerk said that the doctors frowned on competition;

However, that it might be well to exercise discretion.

“But can you tell,” she asked the clerk with something like a shrug,

“If I am apt to get a craze for spirits or for drug? I shudder when I think of how I may be tempting fate,

And possibly become a slave to drink or opiate.”

The clerk remarked: “I know it’s true the magazines abuse ’em,

But as to all these remedies, there’s lots of people use ’em.”

She bit her lips, she frowned, and thought, she rubbed her dimpled chin,

RUNNING NO RISK

Then sighed in fretful wise and said: "I'd think it
was a sin

If I should"—then upon the soap and powder case
she leaned—

"If I should wake an appetite and be a liquor fiend!"

The clerk said: "Really, Miss, there's folks that go
and get a habit

From using stuff that wouldn't phase the make up
of a rabbit."

"Well, if you're sure," she murmured then, "I really
think that I

Will, just this once, test what I have been often urged
to try."

The clerk turned to the shelf of cures and asked:
"Which is it, please?"

His hand uplifted, ready on the chosen one to seize.

She blushed and said: "My family, my closest
friends and pastor

Advise me that it's what I need. I'll take a porous
plaster!"

AN UNCLE BILL STORY

“Tell you a tale o’ the sea? I will;
Come gather around,” said Uncle Bill.
Then Jacky and Jenny climbed one on each knee
To hear all this marvelous tale of the sea:

“ ’Twas when I was out on the Nancy Q.
A-roamin’ around on the ocean blue
That happened this incident strange and true.
The Nancy was makin’ for land one day
When suddenly there was the deuce to pay
Where all o’ the trip had been blithe an’ gay.

“We stuck on the slope of a mighty wave,
Though many a stagger the Nancy gave
It seemed we were bound for a watery grave.
The wind, don’t you see, was from dead ahead;
The current, as doubtless you may have read,
Was runnin’ the other way instead.

“The Nancy would climb to about the top
Then seem to give up, and would slowly drop;
She slid to the bottom of that there hill—
Or billow, or wave—and she’d then stand still
Till the current would carry her up, an’ then,
By ginger, she’d simply slide down again!

AN UNCLE BILL STORY

“So back’ards an’ for’ards she slid five weeks,
An’ never a schooner the captain speaks;
It seemed like the ocean was bleak an’ bare
For nobody else but ourselves was there;
We slid an’ we clumb, an’ we clumb an’ slid
Until—well, we pretty near starved, we did!

“The captain he wept, an’ the second mate
Ast me what to do for to get things straight,
Then I told the mate of a litle plan
An’ he said that I was a brainy man.
We all got behind and we pushed the ship
Till she mounted the wave an’ resumed her trip.

“The captain said I was both wise an’ bold—
But somehow I caught quite an awful cold,
And never again would your uncle choose
To get overboard without overshoes.”

THE CURING OF WILLIAM HICKS

Bill Hicks had asthma—he would swear
With each recurring paroxysm.
He cured it—lived out in the air,
And that gave him the rheumatism.

The doctors cured his rheumatiz—
Of that there never was a question.
Strong acids stopped those pains of his
But left him ill with indigestion.

Dyspepsia fled before a course
Of eating grain. (It would delight us
To cheer this scheme till we were hoarse,
But Bill then had appendicitis.)

He rallied from the surgeon's knife
And laid six weeks without a quiver;
The operation saved his life—
The loafing, though, knocked out his liver.

To cure his liver troubles he
Took muscle stunts—you know how they go.
From liver ills he then was free
But all the strains gave him lumbago.

THE CURING OF WILLIAM HICKS

Lumbago is a painful thing—

A masseuse with a visage solemn
Rubbed the lumbago out by spring
But twisted poor Bill's spinal column.

To rid his backbone of the twist

They used some braces—they were careless—
The padding for his head they missed;
They made him straight and left him hairless.

Drugs were prescribed to grow his hair;

These acted just as represented,
But through some woeful lack of care
They soaked in, and left him demented.

Then to a sanitarium

They took poor Bill, and he was treated;
His brain with health began to hum—
Next asthma! Ward was poorly heated!

“More open air,” the doctors said,

But Hicks cried: “No, you cannot lure me.
I'll stay right here upon my bed
And shoot the man that tries to cure me!”

THE EDUCATED BEE

Gillicuddy Migglebury had an educated bee—

A humble bee, in truth, but very talented was he;
Gillicuddy taught him music till he sang in any key,
And his name was Fuzzy Wuzzy—he was fuzzy,
don't you see?

Was he fuzzy? Yes, he was.

Gillicuddy Migglebury took this humble bee to church
And he let the bee go seeking for a comfortable
perch.

Now the bee went to the choir loft in its aimless, rest-
less search,
And among the singer's bonnets he began to loaf
and lurch—

Was he lazy? Yes, he was.

When the choir began to warble then the bee began
to sing,

And he boomed a bass arrangement just as nice
as anything—

But the liquid-voiced soprano felt the rustle of his
wing

And she paused between the measures to say: "O,
you awful thing!"

Was he awful? Yes, he was.

THE EDUCATED BEE

Now, a bee, you know, has feelings (honest pride we must admire)

And this bee was slightly angered by the spiteful singer's ire,

So he answered with his stinger to that singer in the choir

And she shrieked a shriek of terror and she yelled a yell of "Fire!"

Was she fiery? Yes, she was.

Then the others lost the motif of the anthem they had sung,

And their books in frenzied swiftness at the bumble bee they flung,

While about their heads, delighted, in the atmosphere he hung

And he bumped and he grumbled and he rumbled, and he stung!

Was he busy? Yes, he was.

Seeing all this tense excitement, straight the minister arose

And attempted to dissuade the choir from all its throws and throes,

But the bee came down upon him like a warrior on his foes

And he got the dominie a dab upon his Roman nose.

Was he nosey? Yes, he was.

O, the tumult they created floated out across the town,

And was heard by the fire marshal, Mr. William Henry Brown,

THE EDUCATED BEE

Who post-hasted to the church and with a grave, official frown,

Ordered all, the bee included, that they instantly sit down.

Was he sitting? Yes, he was.

That is all—the bee was captured, we are very glad to tell,

By his master, Migglebury, who returned him to his cell—

But they say that when the preacher felt the sting and gave his yell

He referred to a location which it's not polite to spell.

Was he burning? Yes, he was.

Gillicuddy Migglebury had an educated bee—

Just a humble bumble bee that sang in almost any key;

But he never ever afterward joined in the harmony
Of the choir that sang the anthems for a high artistic fee.

Was he wicked? Yes, he was.

MISTER WHAMMY—CUM—WHIM

Sometimes when boys is cuttin' up,
Or poundin' wif their birfday cup
Against th' table—cause most boys
Ist has to keep a-makin' noise—
Their pa he says for them to stop
Or else they're go' hear somepin' drop!
An' they don't hear their pa, nor pay
Atten-chun when he talks that way,
Why, nen old Mister Whammy-cum-whim,
So lean, an' long, an' light, an' slim—
Why, nen sometimes he takes those boys
'At's makin' all this awful noise
An' won't hear what their pa he says,
An' punishes in dif'rent ways.

One time there is a boy 'at makes
So much noise 'at th' house ist shakes!
An' when his pa he says to "quit"
This boy he ist don't hear a bit—
An' nen old Mister Whammy-cum-whim
He come, an' says he's after him,
An' take that boy to where he's got
More kind o' tools—I don't know what
He ain't got! An' he tell this boy:



Bad boys better lookout for him!"

"Old, slim Mister Whammy-cum-whim—

—MISTER WHAMMY-CUM-WHIM.



MR. WHAMMY-CUM-WHIM

“I’m go’ to teach you to an-noy
Your pa, when he is tired, an’ tries
To read, an’ rest his achin’ eyes.”
Says he: “For boys ’at ist never hears
I got a way to im-prove their ears!”

Nen old Mister Whammy-cum-whim says: “Ho!
I ought to a-done this long ago.”
He grab that boy an’ he stretch his ears—
But he don’t pull till he bring th’ tears
’Cause this here boy, why, he ist can’t feel
Th’ pull! An’ he never even squeal
Till he go to look in th’ lookin’ glass—
An’ his ears is wide, so’s ’at he can’t pass
Through the door ’less he turn an’ go side-ways!
An’ old Mister Whammy-cum-whim he says:
“I’ll bet you hear ist th’ leastest sound
If it’s in th’ air, or it’s underground;
An’ I’ll bet you mind what your pa says now—
Or at least you will hear him, anyhow!”

Old slim Mister Whammy-cum-whim!
Bad boys better look out for him!

PIE

Why is it no one ever tries
To learn who 'twas invented pies?
What woman, beautiful and just,
First rolled, and pinched, and cut the crust,
And, to alleviate distress,
Filled it with pungent happiness?

First, there is juicy apple pie—
For this did Father Adam sigh.
It was no apple, red and sweet,
That led astray his halting feet—
It must have been an apple pie
That loomed before his longing eye.
Such pie—such apple pie, forsooth,
As folks remember from their youth—
A pie with prinked and crumpled edge,
Each slice of which would make a wedge
To fetch one's good intent apart
From any clutch on mind or heart;
It is no wonder, after all,
That Adam was inclined to fall.

Then, there are chicken pie, and lamb,
And oyster, mutton, veal-and-ham,

PIE

And currant and gooseberry pie,
Blackberry, prune, and cherry pie,
Peach, plum, and sweet potato pie—
Say, ever eat tomato pie?
Tomato pie? Almost unknown,
Yet it deserves a pastry throne
For when it glows aright we see
The purple robe of royalty;
And, O, the taste and tang of it
When by a hungry human bit!

Such stuff as dreams! Aye, dreams like these:
That comets are the bits of cheese
And all the planets in the sky,
And little stars, are luscious pie!
Our hearts in gladness to immerse
By eating through the universe!
O, one should never criticise
The sober souls who scoff at pies,
Whose views of pie are dark and grim,
For they leave so much pie for him!
Come, build a tablet; set it high:
“To Him or Her Who First Made Pie.”
O, Pie! O, my!

TO A CIGAR

O, Panatella, you are blent
With much of human element,
And when your form and fate we scan
We think how you resemble man.

We judge you by the wrapper, which
Is thought to make you poor or rich;
And man—by outer garb of his
We reckon what the filler is.

Although man at his fortune mocks,
Like you, he's sometimes in a box;
Like you, his maker's cunning hand
Determines what shall be his brand.

Sometimes you are domestic. He
Is often so compelled to be.
Again, to honor custom's due
He must provide much revenue.

And man—like you, a helpless thing—
Is made for some one's pleasuring;
Like you, some day he meets his match;
Like you, he many dreams will hatch.

TO A CIGAR

O, Panatella, you and man
Indeed fulfill the selfsame plan,
For in the end aside you're cast
And come to ashes at the last.

LINES TO THE SEVENTEEN YEAR LOCUST

O, seventeen year locust!
Now through the ground thou pokest
Thy penetrant proboscis,
And, spurning grass or mosses,
Thou climbest up the treeses
And baskest in the breezes!

O, seventeen year locust!
In balmy warmth thou soakest
Until thy worn out duster,
By dint of fuss and fluster,
Finds its discarding final
By splitting up the spinal!

O, seventeen year locust!
On thee our eyes are focused;
The old inhabitanters
And ancient tale descanters
Now vow that they remember
Thee, "three years, come September!"

O, seventeen year locust!
Full soon in joy thou croakest
Thy melody that raspest

LINES TO THE SEVENTEEN YEAR LOCUST

A fellow till he gaspest
Because thy style of singing
Is far from rapture-bringing.

Cicada septendecim,
Herbivoristic besom!
How gladsomely thou skippest
As each green tree thou strippest,
Until thy luscious marrow
Dost tempt the English sparrow!

Sing, seventeen year locust!
For thou art hocus-pocused.
Two lays are in thy life-time—
One singing and one wife-time—
One long, large, good, square dinner—
And then farewell, thou sinner!

AN ARTIFICIAL TRAGEDY

There was an artificial man—

His hair was not his own;

One eye was glass; one ear was wax;

His nose was carved from bone;

His legs were manufactured ones;

His teeth were deftly made;

Six ribs of rubber also were

Within his form arrayed.

He wooed a maid of paint and puff,

Whose face and form were art,

And found she had, when they were wed,

An artificial heart.

However, they did not indulge

In petty stress and strife—

They hired their fussing done, and led

An artificial life.

They read by artificial light;

Ate artificial rice;

Drank artificial water, cooled

By artificial ice;

An artificial organ played

Them artificial tunes;

A phonograph would soothe their babe

With artificial croons.

AN ARTIFICIAL TRAGEDY

Alas! At last there came a day
To harrow up the soul!
The artificial man could not
Buy artificial coal,
And with no artificial heat
To warm their chilly breath,
They imitated other folks
In artificial death.

OLD MIS' RAIN

Old Mis' Rain she come along a-creepin' an' a-creep-
in',
Hid behind the hill an' kept a-peepin' an' a-peepin'—
Wind commenced to sing an' set the flowers all to
reelin';
Like as if they's jiggin' it a-toein' an' a-heelin';
Then like when you tap upon a tambo with your
knuckles
Old Mis' Rain began to dance, a-steppin' to her
chuckles.

Comin' down the hill she stopped an' nodded to a
daisy,
Kind o' sort o' loafin' like she's feelin' awful lazy,
Laughin' at the meadow larks that hurried under
cover—
Smilin' with the sunshine that was miles an' miles
above 'er:
Then when Mister Thunder drummed: "I'll show you
who's your master!"
Old Mis' Rain she tucked her skirts and got to dancin'
faster.

Out across the level fields a-gleamin' an' a-glancin',
Here an' there an' everywhere a-hurryin' an'
prancin',

OLD MIS' RAIN

Double shuffle, jig an' break, an' laughin' as she stepped it—

Mister Thunder beatin' time an' cheerin' while she kept it.

Now she tripped the lady's chain an' sashayed down the middle,

Wind a-croonin' through the trees as if it played a fiddle.

Old Mis' Rain she danced her way to where the sun was settin',

Not a step an' not a bow an' not a whirl forgettin',

Then she turned an' looked at us, a-dimplin' an' a-blushin'—

Mister Thunder an' his drum a-growlin' while they's hushin'—

Old Mis' Rain she called to us: "My blushes give you warnin'—

Like as not I'll come again to dance tomorrow mornin'."

SOAP BILIN'

She's got th' iron kittle swingin' underneath th'
trees—

An' when She swung it up I guess She kind o' fooled
th' bees,

They's only one or two o' them a loafin' round th'
place

A-huntin' airly flowers out an' diggin' for a tas'e
O' honey in th' heart o' them—an' I just bet a dime
They thought 'at She 'uz thinkin' it 'uz apple butter
time.

They might 'a' knowed—but then o' course the bees
has been asleep

An' couldn't know th' way 'at She has made a pi'nt
to keep

Th' ashes f'om th' fierplace, an' save th' scraps o'
fat,

An' git th' best time o' th' moon f'om ol' Keziah
Pratt.

Ye know th' moon mus' be jest right er they ain't
any hope

O' gittin' good results when ye set out to bile your
soap.

An' so them lazy bees they watched—they buzzed
aroun' at dawn

SOAP BILIN'

An' wiped the'r lips an' rubbed the'r han's while
She 'uz puttin' on

Th' kittle, 'cause they 'membered how th' apple butter smelled

An' how they gaumed the'rselves 'ith juice until they fairly swelled.

I swan! When She poured in th' grease I laughed like all possessed.

Them bees—well, 'tain't no odor blowed from Araby th' blest!

Them disapp'inted bees! W'y, say, they hovered roun' an' sniffed

An' seemed to be a waitin' for th' apple smell to drift

Up to 'em. When it didn't come they buzzed an' hummed an' rared

An' acted like they'd sting Her, too, if so be as they dared.

But She—She's in no merry mood—no day for fussin'. Nope.

I reckon She's best left alone when She is b'ilin' soap.

Can't blame th' bees no more'n me—just when them apple blooms

Had ought to be a sendin' out the air full o' perfumes

It isn't jest th' finest thing to find th' airth an' sky

A-soakin' 'ith th' smelliness o' bacon rinds an' lye!

Now, I jest slipped away from there as quiet as you please

An' lit out fer th' meadow lot—an' there 'uz them there bees!

“OLD DOC”

Kind of a old back number—never got up to date—
Leastways he ain't no doctor like they turn out of
late;

Never goes in for speeches, never describes these
germs,

Never scares all his patients with these here Latin
terms—

All of us folks he's treated feel like we was his flock—
Trouble, an' joy an' sorrow, he treats it all—Old Doc.

Huh! When he comes to see you, it's like the mornin'
light

Laughin' its way in gladness out of the heart of
night—

He doesn't look so solemn you feel inclined to say:
“How is the coffin market? What is the price today?”
Thumbs at your pulse a minute, looks at your eyes an'
tongue,

Chuckles: “You'll live a while yet, 'less 'n you might
be hung!”

Never hear him a-talkin' how when a man gets old
He ought to quit his livin', his hands is due to fold!

“OLD DOC”

He's fought a world o' sickness; lightened a world
o' fears

Sence he's been dosin' us folks, nigh onto fifty years.
When you are losin' handholts, Doc. says for you to
“Try!

Never too old to live, boy; always too young to die!”

Yes, he's a old back number—mebbe he don't know
much,

Mebbe he ain't got learnin', got no professor's touch;
Still he ain't always tellin' when you had best be
killed—

Curin' 's the work he aims at, that's how his time is
filled.

He's what the feller sung of—shade of a great, great
rock

Out in the world's big desert—that's what he is,
Old Doc!

HOWDY, MR. WINTER?

Howdy, Mr. Winter! If it isn't you again!
Haven't had a visit from you since I dunno when.
Though I heard you laughin'—must 'a' been a week
ago—

When the north wind shouted just as it began to
blow;

Thought I heard you chuckle when the grass was
turned to brown

An' the withered flowers lost their holt an' fluttered
down.

Hear you at the window; hear you in the chimney,
too—

Howdy, Mister Winter; howdy, howdy do!

See the leaves a-racin' down the middle o' the street,
Leapin' an' a-dancin' like they all was bound to beat,
Jumpin' far an' fu'ther till they're scattered round-
about—

Some gives up an' falters like they was all tuckered
out;

They all know you're comin', and they rustle from
the trees

Catchin' in their hurry to the fingers of the breeze,
Worryin' an' scurryin' to get away from you—

Howdy, Mister Winter; howdy, howdy do!

HOWDY, MISTER WINTER?

Little brook is sleepy where it winds around the hill—
Yesterday 'twas singin' but today it's very still;
Somethin' come an' told it in the middle afternoon
An' it stopped its singin'—never finished all the
tune.

Hawk away up yonder in a never-endin' sail;
Somewhere from the stubble comes the whistle of
a quail;

Frosty mist a-creepin' where the sky was clear an'
blue—

Howdy, Mister Winter; howdy, howdy do!

Howdy, Mister Winter! I can hear you at th' door.
Got the fire a-blazin' an' the shadows paint the floor,
Play among the pictures; an' the ruddy gleams o'
light

Stream out through the windows, where you're waitin'
in the night.

I can hear you mutter in the bushes down the lane,
See your snow flakes pattin' on the glowin' window
pane.

Here's the place for me to be, an' there's the place
for you—

Howdy, Mister Winter; howdy, howdy do!

THE COAXIN' RIVER

I knows dey is wuk foh me ter do,
But I dess so drowsy thoo en thoo
Dat hit seem ter me dat hit dess ain' right
Foh er man ter wuk fum mawn twell night.
En I needs de coin, ca'se mah clo'es is ol'
En mah pockets ain' got er thing ter hol',
But I wish dis wuk would dess lemme be
When de rivah hit keep a-coaxin' me.

O de riveh keep on a-coaxin' me—
A-coaxin', a-coaxin', a-coaxin' me—
En hit sing: "Down hyuh by de willer tree
Is de place whah er man had oughter be!"

De riveh hit hums de whole day long
Dess like es if hit 'ud sing er song,
En hit seem ter chuckle: "O, doan' yo' wish
Yo' could drap yo' wuk en could come en fish?"
Ef I tell de boss dat I dess cain' wuk
He'll cuss, en 'low dat I want ter shuk.
But, whut'll I do? Now, I want ter know,
When de riveh keep on a-coaxin' so?

O de riveh keep on a-coaxin' so—
A-coaxin', a-coaxin', a-coaxin' so—

THE COAXIN' RIVER

En hit wispeh: "Man, dey is boun' ter bite
En ef yo' doan' fish, yo' doan' treat 'm right!"

I dess cain' slave in dis br'ilin' sun.
Dey ain' no use—I is nach'ly done!
When de riveh coax, I can hahdly wait
Twell I git er can en go dig some bait.
So I's gwine ter look foh my hook en line
En dat 'liable two-bit pole er mine,
En I'll sit en nod wid de floatin' bob—
Ca'se de riveh coax twell I lose mah job!

O de riveh hit keep a-coaxin' me—
A-coaxin', a-coaxin', a-coaxin' me—
En hit laughin' now like hits sides done split;
"Um-huh! I knowed I could fetch yo' yit!"

AFTER AWHILE

All dem roses gwine ter fade;
Honey, doan' yo' sigh.
Gwine ter be mo' roses made
Foh yo' bye-an'-bye;
Gwine ter be mo' roses grow—
Doan' yo' worry, chile,
'Bout dem tho'ns dat hu't yo' so:
Roses—afteh 'while.

We dess 'bleeged ter hab some night
Sho' as yo' is bo'n;
Afteh 'while hit gwine be light—
Finest kin' o' mo'n.
Dahkes' clouds dat eveh was
Hangin' 'roun' dis chile;
Doan' yo' worry none, because—
Sunshine, afteh while.

All dem teahs dat come today
Has dey puppose, too;
Afteh while dey's gwine erway—
Hit's de way dey do.
Teahs dess wash erway yo' woe;
Doan' yo' worry, chile.
Sunshine bring de rose, yo' know—
Afteh while, a smile!

THE HOME-COMING

Sure, it's years an' years, alanna, since we saw you
leave the door,

But you're comin' home tomorrow, an' you'll never
leave us more.

You are comin' home, aroon,
Wid the brightness of the noon,

An' the mother's lookin' younger than she ever did
afore.

Ah, 'twas all the world between us when you went
across the sea ;

Just a towhead Irish laddie fresh from playin' at my
knee,

Wid the curls upon your brow—

An' you've grown to manhood now,

But you've always been the laddie that you used to
be, to me.

There'll be scrapin' of the fiddles when the neighbors
come to greet,

An' the smilin' of the mother's sure to make your
welcome sweet.

Sure, she's often, often wept

As she told of how you crept

Through the roses where the blossoms tried to kiss
your little feet.

THE HOME-COMING

'Twill be joy for all tomorrow, when you're in your
home again,
But you'll never be the laddie that I laughed an' sang
wid then;
An' I somehow—Never mind!
Sure, the tears would make me blind.
But I somehow wish the laddies wouldn't grow up
into men.

Ah, it's years an' years, alanna, since your boy feet
hurried down
To the ship that stood awaitin' over there beyond the
town,
But you're comin' home, aroon,
Wid the brightness of the noon—
And the mother'd not change places wid the queen
in golden crown.

“MUSHMELONS”

Mushmelons! They'll be good an' ripe in jest a little
while—

I reckon they're the best; although they're sort o'
out o' style.

Some people likes—er says they likes—th' watermelon
best,

An' 'low they's nothin' finer fer to put behind th'
vest.

I know it's red as ary rose, an' mighty nigh as sweet—
But say! Old time mushmelons! W'y they simply
can't be beat!

Then there's them little nutmeg things, an' cantalopes,
an' gems—

So triffin' 'at it's hard to tell th' melons f'm th'
stems.

They's lots o' people says 'at these is what they most
p'fer—

But they ain't got mushmelons beat, I tell you now.
No, sir!

Mushmelons—when they're good and ripe, they got a
rich p'fume

MUSHMELONS

Jest like the coaxin' tang 'at holds a sweet shrub bush
in bloom;
Th' inside is as yaller as the finest kind o' gold.
Mushmelons—when they're thataway, I want all I
can hold.

W'y, when I feel th' yaller juice a tricklin' down my
chin,
An' have to shet my lips an' sort o' breathe th' good-
ness in—
Baldheaded an' rheumatic as I be, I'm full o' joy
An' e'enamost as happy as I was when jest a boy!

Mushmelons! Th' old-fashioned kind 'll be here after
while—
I reckon they're th' best they is, if they be out o'
style!

HIS ENEMIES

Wind and weather and rain and sun—
Wasn't for them I'd get things done;
Fixed no patch for the garden truck—
Moon was wrong; it was just my luck.
Find a penny and lose a dime—
Luck is against me, every time.

Bet a cent it would rain all day
'F I had a farm and was making hay.
Had one farm; it was close to town;
Stock strayed out where the fence was down,
Crops was poor, 'cause I farmed it wrong—
Luck is against me, right along.

Heard of a job I could get last night;
Thought I would go; didn't feel just right—
Went there today 'bout a-half past nine—
Fellow had stolen that job o' mine!
He went around last night—but, say,
Luck is against me, every day.

Heired some money when I was young—
Them was the days when my dollars rung!
When all the cash I had was spent,
Then I learned what "be careful" meant.

HIS ENEMIES

'F I had the money I'd save it right—
Luck is against me, day and night.

Wind and weather and rain and sun—
None o' them's lucky for me; not one!
Hear of a place where there's work to spare—
Somebody's got it when I get there,
Always a hill that I've got to climb—
Luck is against me, every time.

ISAIAH PERKINS' CREED

We talk about the Simple Life as though 'twere something new,
As though we've just discovered what ideal to pursue,
Yet old Isaiah Perkins, who expired in '83,
Had formed a creed of life that was as simple as could be.

Long, long ago, all through the year, Isaiah Perkins went
With one blithe measure on his lips—his song of pure content;
He softly sang this ballad, which it seems he thought would give
His biasless opinion on the way that one should live:

“What do I care for gold an' silver, all the money that's in this land?
Gi' me a wife an' fourteen childer', a old gray hoss, an' a peanut stand.”

This takes all modern questions—all the problems we discuss—
And answers them completely; and it should appeal to us.

ISAIAH PERKINS' CREED

You note that Greed and Mammon are out-spokenly
decried

And that it deprecates in forceful terms Race Suicide.

And so, when from the platform or from oracles of
state

Philosophy is flung about in words of worth and
weight,

And there are rules of life laid down for guiding
you and me,

We hum Isaiah Perkins' song—he died in '83:

“What do I care for gold an' silver, all the money
that's in this land?

Gi' me a wife an' fourteen childer', a old gray hoss,
an' a peanut stand.”

THE DEDICATION

(ABRAHAM LINCOLN CENTRE, 1905.)

And what is this you dedicate? Is it the brick and
stone?

These walls set high and fair—do you but build these
walls alone?

Is it that you would dedicate this work that you have
done,

Or consecrate the structure of great deeds that is
begun?

We may fold hands and look at this, and know that
it is good,

And praise the marvels that are wrought of senseless
stone and wood,

But we must go bare-armed and strong from labor
made complete

To all the harder, longer tasks we know that we must
meet.

The perfect house is not made up of roof and wall
and floor—

The perfect house bids welcome or cries Godspeed at
door—

THE DEDICATION

Its builders labor on in love, are spendthrift of their
strength
Until the house shall stand in simple majesty at
length.

It is the house not made with hands, not built of
stone and steel,
Whose base is the great common thought that all of
us must feel,
Whose clear design but follows out the one eternal
plan
That they who work in brotherhood must know their
brother man.

That they who work in brotherhood, who build with
word and deed,
Toil on a structure which outgrows the confines of a
creed,
Raise up a temple wonderful beneath the blessed
skies—
A temple as enduring as the truth that never dies.

Build on. Build high and true and fair, throughout
the changing years,
And light shall break where darkness broods, and
smiles take place of tears.
The blessing of a worthy deed is that its lustre glows
Like sunbeams coaxing laughter to the dewdrops on
the rose.

THE DEDICATION

So, you have built—but still you build, and not with
brick and beams,
For you shall breathe the breath of life into your
cherished dreams,
And you shall see your faith take form again, and
yet again,
For you build more than temples—Aye, for you are
building men!

And what is this we dedicate? Not roof and floor
and wall,
But the brave trust in that white light which leads us
one and all;
We consecrate our hope and faith in this that has
been done
And dedicate ourselves anew to what is but begun.

THE MISSISSIPPI

As a ribbon flung out from a generous hand,
Till it loops in its leagues the fair heart of the land,
So the river—The Father of Waters—is flung
From the place where the pines by the north winds
are swung.

From the stillness and peace of the whispering lakes
To the shore where the sea in its majesty breaks.

And it murmurs for miles or it leaps in its strength
Or it coils as a lariat coiled on its length,
And it stops for a space with its eddying whirls
While its form spins about as a garland of pearls
And it sings in the sun and it dreams in the moon
As it races in joy from the falls to lagoon.

It has mirrored the banners of crimson and gold
That were borne by adventurers dauntlessly bold
Who were winning new realms and were finding new
ways

Through the green of the forest and gray of the haze
That was spread on the prairie and wreathed on the
hill

When the courage of Spain was at one with its will.

THE MISSISSIPPI

It has laughed with the lightly wrought lilies of
France

As the flag kept the time to the lilt of the dance
When the noblemen came, and the beautiful maids
Sang the ballads of old in the hush of the glades,
And it knows of the days that were gentle and calm
When the lilies of France nodded over the palm.

It has run with a red—not a red of the dawn,
But the red flood of war in the days that are gone
When its bosom was swept by the shot and the shell
And the smoke of the war was the vapor of hell
That blew low on its surface and hid hulls and spars
When the stars and the stripes met the stars and
the bars.

But today, as majestic as ages ago,
From the hills of the north to the valleys below,
As a ribbon that binds the palmetto and pine,
As a bond that is set from the gulf to the line—
As an artery throbbled by the pulse of the land,
So the river flows on, ever stately and grand.

And the centuries come and the centuries go,
But the river—The Father of Waters—shall flow
As the ointment of old from the ewer was spilled
On the place where the Lord said the builders should
build.

Aye, the great Mississippi, majestic and calm,
Has endured, shall endure, as a blessing and balm.

WHO HATH A BOOK

Who hath a book
Hath friends at hand,
And gold and gear
At his command;
And rich estates,
If he but look,
Are held by him
Who hath a book.

Who hath a book
May fight, or sing,
Or ride or rule,
Or anything.
And he may dwell
In humble hut,
Or palace, ere
The book be shut.

Who hath a book
Hath but to read
And he may be
A king, indeed.
His kingdom is
His inglenook—
All this is his
Who hath a book.

WHO HATH A BOOK

Who hath a book
Should thank the Lord
Because he may
A book afford;
And in his prayer
This clause is due:
“Lord, bless the men
Who write books, too!”

MY FAT FRIEND'S SMILE

My fat friend's smile! It's a homely phrase,
But it takes me back to the other days—
To the other days, when the heart was young
And its saddest songs were as yet unsung.

'Twas a cheery smile; I can see it yet,
With the twinkling mirth I can not forget—
How it dimpled out till it blent for me
In a map of the Land of Jollity!

You knew when you saw its rippling start
From his laughing eyes, it was full of heart;
It was full of heart as a smile could be—
The sort of smile that is good to see.

My fat friend's smile! Ah, it's good to know
That you had such a friend long, long ago;
And it brightens many a weary while
This thought of my fat friend and his smile.

GOOD FELLOWSHIP

Ho, brother, it's the handclasp and the good word
and the smile

That does the most and helps the most to make the
world worth while!

It's all of us together, or it's only you and I—

A ringing song of friendship, and the heart beats
high;

A ringing song of friendship, and a word or two of
cheer,

Then all the world is gladder and the bending sky
is clear!

It's you and I together—and we're brothers one
and all

Whenever through good fellowship we hear the subtle
call,

Whenever in the ruck of things we feel the helping
hand

Or see the deeper glow that none but we may un-
derstand—

Then all the world is good to us and all is worth the
while;

Ho, brother, it's the handclasp and the good word and
the smile!

THE BIG BRASS BAND

I want to hear a murmur down the distance of the
street—

A mild and mellow murmur with a rythm in its
beat;

To hear it growing stronger as the melody comes
near

Until I hear the trumpets in the high notes ringing
clear,

Until the strains are fashioned in a tune I under-
stand—

I want to hear a Big Brass Band.

I want to see them swinging 'round the corner as
they come,

Each foot in perfect cadence with the booming of the
drum;

I want to hear the music grow tremendous in its
surge

While piccolo and flute and all the brasses grandly
merge

Into a storm of harmony that sweeps across the
land—

I want to hear a Big Brass Band.

THE BIG BRASS BAND

I want to see them passing, while the cymbals clang
and clash

To hear the cornet lead them with its silver fire and
dash,

To hear the tuba shouting and the trombone echoing
The French horns and the altos, till the instruments
all sing

A glory song, or paeon, that is thrilling, great and
grand—

I want to hear a Big Brass Band.

I want to watch them going, with the boys that tag
behind

In envy of the drummers and to all the others blind;
I want to hear the music dwindle down as on they go,
Until it is the murmur it began with, soft and low,
A shadow of the sweetness of the sound, you under-
stand—

I want to hear a Big Brass Band.

GREEN APPLES AND SALT

I'm hungry today, with a shadowy kind
Of a hunger for what I will never more find—
A hunger that hints at a feast of delight,
But I know if I ate, that it wouldn't taste right,
That it wouldn't be rich with the tang and the zest
That it had in the days when it tasted the best,
For in fact or in fancy I know I'd find fault—
Yet I'm hungry today for green apples and salt.

If I only had freckles, and snarls in my hair,
And one front tooth missing, and both my feet bare,
And just one suspender, and pants that were torn,
And a hickory hat that was tattered and worn,
And a collarless shirt that was ripped in the sleeves,
Then I'd find all the joy that each urchin receives
When the orchard fence he will go o'er with a vault
And be ready to feast on green apples and salt.

Green apples! The puckery crab had a snap
And an acidy nip that was good for a chap,
But the old harvest apple—it's at its best now
When between green and ripe it swings low from the
bough
And teases and coaxes and dares you to eat!

GREEN APPLES AND SALT

The green harvest apple is one you can't beat;
There isn't a boy that it cannot make halt
If he likes—and who doesn't?—green apples and salt.

And I'm hungry today with a ghost of desire,
With a shadowy craving that seems to inquire
If I'm losing my hold on the best that I knew,
On the fun of my boydays, and appetite, too!
And I want to be out in the world of the trees,
In the world of the boys and the birds and the bees—
But I know that my fancy would find me at fault
Though I'm hungry today for green apples and salt.

THE OLD MOTTO

We found it in the attic where it long had lain away ;
The dust had veiled the letters in a shroud of misty
 gray,
A spider's web was tangled in its odd fantastic weaves
Across the frame whose corners were hand carved in
 oaken leaves.
The old, discarded motto—it was worked in green and
 red
On perforated cardboard, and “God Bless Our
 Home” it said.

Crude, homely, and old-fashioned is this relic of the
 past ;
Once thought a thing of beauty but now flung aside
 at last—
Yet now the faded colors that the quaint old letters
 bear
Seem as the afterglowing of the quiet days that were—
The days whose every twilight from frettings brought
 release,
And stars swept through the silence that held a Sab-
 bath peace.

Again the gate chain rattles, and again our eyes be-
 hold

THE OLD MOTTO

The little path that found its way through phlox
and marigold,
The broad steps and the doorway through which we
looked to see
The face of one whose gentle smile was meant for you
and me;
And then the dim old parlor that opened from the
hall
And had the worsted motto swung in honor on the
wall.

“God Bless Our Home”—And loving hands reach out
from all the years,
The hands that always reached to help, that wiped
away our tears;
And now we know full well that when this motto held
its place
They meant the faded prayer that today we slowly
trace;
That every morn of work to do, that every night of
rest,
The good old home was by some mystic benediction
blest.

WANDERLUST AND HEIMWEH

My feet they have the wanderlust—
They fain would lead me on
Adown the gray road soft with dust
Through eventide and dawn
To where there lift the distant hills,
A-many ways to roam.
My heart with one deep cadence thrills;
A whispered song of home.

My feet would set themselves to go
Still on and up and down,
To seek the pathways to and fro
Through country and through town,
To find the sunshine here, and there
The shade of city walls—
But softly on the pulsing air
The home place ever calls.

O, fair the path! And fair and far
The countries I would see,
And morning glow and evening star
Show forth the path to me.
My eyes look on, my lips are mute,
But be it night or noon

WANDERLUST AND HEIMWEH

There comes to me, irresolute
The homesong in a croon.

The wanderlust it lures my feet
To where the pathways part,
But now there flames with sudden heat
The heimweh in my heart.
And so farewell to reaching trail
And flashing wind-flung foam
My heart but heeds the stronger hail—
The backward path, and home.

OLD GLORY'S DAY

A day for Old Glory—a day for the drums
To rumble and roll as the old banner comes
Triumphantly glowing atop of the mast
And rich with the splendor it holds of the past,
The glory of old—of the days that are gone—
And redder and bluer with tints of the dawn,
And silvery white as the foam of the sea
With the promise that comes from the days yet to be!

The red glowing redder, the stars glowing brighter,
The blue growing bluer and truer away;
The red growing redder, the white growing whiter—
The grace of Old Glory, the flag of today.

A day for Old Glory—a day for a song,
For a melody sweet and a chant full and strong,
For a paean of faith and an ode of our trust
As the flag sways in time with each eddying gust
That will send it in ripples all bravely and high
Till it glows as a beacon light set in the sky,
Till it flashes and flames in the heart of the blue
With the surge of the song made for me and for you.

The red growing redder, and stars glowing brighter,
The blue growing deeper and stronger away;

OLD GLORY'S DAY

The red growing redder, the white flashing whiter—
The truth of Old Glory, the one flag today.

A day for Old Glory—and page upon page
We may read all the story of glorious age,
We may hear in the rustling of its sweeping folds
The wonderful promise it held and still holds,
The faith that makes strong and the hope that makes
true—

The strength of the red and the white and the blue—
We may hear it, and know it, and feel it, and see
All the pride of the past and the glory to be.

The red growing redder, the blue growing bluer,
The stars flashing clearer and dearer alway,
And the red and the white and the blue all the truer—
The glow of Old Glory, the flag of today!

THE ARMY OF THE SHADOWS

*I hear no shouts as the soldiers come
To the mellow throb of the distant drum.*

They come—A fragrant of what they were;
The ranks are scattering year by year,
For one by one with his olden air
Has answered the summons of Death with “Here!”
I see them waver and falter on,
Their blue grown shadowy gray with dust—
Grown shadowy gray, as in years ago
Their sabers fell into shadowy rust.

O, this the vision that comes to me;
I watch them trudging adown the street,
The ready soldiers that used to be,
With vibrant drumming to time their feet;
I see them swinging along the way
With brave Old Glory above them all;
And all the lines are complete today—
Made so by the mystical trumpet call.

And quick and eager, erect and bold,
They march triumphantly through my dream—
The soldier men of the days of old
With flags ablow and with swords agleam.
The cannons rumble their warring note,

THE ARMY OF THE SHADOWS

The muskets blaze on the battle's marge,
And out of the bugle's brazen throat
There shrills the terrible cry of "Charge!"

But hold. The mist that was in my eyes
Now drifts away as a cloud is blown,
And the shadows fade, as across the skies
The silent arm of the wind is thrown.
And gray, and grizzled, and halt, and lame,
They falter on to the rounded graves
That glow today in the grace of fame
Beneath the banner that honor waves.

They go—A shadow of what they were;
The ranks are vanishing year by year,
For one by one with his gallant air
Has answered the summons of Death with "Here!"
And so they waver and falter on,
Their blue made shadowy gray with dust—
The fading host that in years ago
Bore forth the grail of the nation's trust.

*And into the shadows march they all
To the sigh of a far-off trumpet call.*

THE MIGHTY NATIONS

We are a mighty nation;
Many our gates, and wide;
Strong in our gleaming armor;
Masters of wind and tide—
Great with a lasting greatness,
Proud with a nation's pride.

* * * * *

Aye, in the dim, dead ages,
Men would enroll the deeds,
Tell of the mighty Persians,
Sing of the wondrous Medes—
Yet they are fallen columns;
Now they are broken reeds.

Once there were proud Egyptians
Telling in brazen tones
How they were great and forceful—
Yet now the night wind moans
Over their shriveled mummies
Hid in the crumbling stones.

Rome, in the days of Caesars,
Battled on land and sea;
Many a kingly vassal

THE MIGHTY NATIONS

Begged but to bend the knee.
Statesman, and sage, and soldier—
Where are they now, these three?

Tarshish and Tyre and Sidon,
Babylon, Athens—all
Bloomed in the dim, dead ages,
Withered, and met their fall;
Tasted the sweets of power—
Left scarce a shattered wall.

Out of the dust of ages,
Let all the nations rise!
Peoples have held them wondrous,
Mighty and strong and wise—
Now they are dead and silent
Under the brooding skies.

* * * * *

We are a mighty nation;
Many our gates, and wide;
Masters of time and fortune;
Strong in a nation's pride—
So were the ones before us;
So were the ones that died.

THE NE'ER DO WELL

He was gentle and kind; he would plan half the day
For an unlooked-for act that would please you some
way;

He would sit up all night with a friend who was ill,
And to do you a favor would work with a will—
But he never amounted to much.

There was something about him that got to your
heart;

It was plain that he never was playing a part,
But that all that he did he was doing for you
And that he was a friend who was lasting and true—
But he never amounted to much.

All the boys he grew up with went rising to fame;
There were some who made money, and all made a
name;

Art and music and letters, the law or finance,
Every one of the rest made the most of his chance—
But he never amounted to much.

Why, there wasn't a child but would come to his arms,
For of jingles and stories he knew all the charms;
Yes, and even the dogs in the street used to leap
At his hand with a bark that was laughingly deep—
But he never amounted to much.



*"Why, there wasn't a child but would come to his
arms,*

For of jingles and stories he knew all the charms."

THE NE'ER-DO-WELL.



THE NE'ER DO WELL

And nobody could tell why he had such a hold
On the rich and the poor, and the young and the old;
He was always on hand for some kind little deed,
He instinctively knew when a friend was in need—
But he never amounted to much.

They have folded his hands, they have laid him to
rest—
And the church couldn't hold all the friends he pos-
sessed;
And fair memories mingled their smiles with the tears
Of the ones who recalled the good deeds of his years—
But he never amounted to much.

“REST AT EASE ”

“And these stones shall be for a memorial.”—The Book of Joshua iv., 7.

Rank on rank the white stones stand
In the valley, on the hill;
File on file across the land
By the river and the rill;
Line on line in long platoons
Where the whisper of the breeze
Like a far off trumpet, croons:
“Rest at ease.”

Rank on rank, as in review,
Regiment on regiment,
With the red and white and blue
Over all, and softly blent
With the sunset in the sky.
Faintly, faintly through the trees
Come the requiems that sigh:
“Rest at ease.”

Rank on rank they slumber here
Recking naught of olden foes;
Day by day new stones appear
As the silent army grows.

REST AT EASE

Company by company
Of the nation's great are these,
Hearing not the melody:
 "Rest at ease."

Where the roses and the vines
 Quiver in the dawning's breath,
Silently they hold the lines
 In the wondrous hush of death;
And the singing of the birds
 And the humming of the bees
Merge into the murmured words:
 "Rest at ease."

Rank on rank the white stones gleam,
 Regiment and regiment
Where the army lies adream,
 Stately and magnificent,
And the mellow bugle blows
 In the tenderest of keys
While the silent army grows:
 "Rest at ease."

“THAT SHALL ABIDE ”

“Then I commended mirth, because a man hath no better thing under the sun than to eat and to drink and to be merry; for that shall abide with him of his labor the days of his life, which God giveth him under the sun.”—Ecclesiastes viii., 15.

Come, talk no more of troubles!
In silence let them end;
In speech each bother doubles,
Neglected, it will mend.
Forget the days depressing—
There have been sunny skies
That brought to us the blessing
Of laughing lips and eyes.

We hug our griefs too tightly,
We count them overmuch,
When hourly, daily, nightly,
Joy lingers for our touch.
We are too prone to borrow,
We are too prone to lend
The sorrow of tomorrow.
What gladness it may send!

We seek too much for sadness
We dream too much of gloom—

THAT SHALL ABIDE

Our hearts bar out the gladness
That begs of us for room.
In fearing and in fretting
We waste the precious whiles,
Forsaking and forgetting
The treasure trove of smiles.

The snow laughs in its falling,
The rain laughs with the grass,
The breezes all are calling
A joy song as they pass; ..
When wintry days are over
The rose laughs into bloom
The chuckle of the clover
Comes drenched with its perfume.

Have done with mete and measure
That tell of saddened whiles;
Count up our richest treasure—
The lasting gold of smiles!
Let us link hands with laughter—
Grief loiters overlong;
We shall find our hereafter
Built up of smile and song.

THE CONQUERORS

"Yet the defenced city shall be desolate, and the habitation forsaken, and left like a wilderness."—The Prophecy of Isaiah, xxvii., 10.

The city it cried to the grass and trees:

"Room for me, room!" and they gave it space,
For cities stop not for a one of these

Where wall upon wall must grow into place.

The trees and the grass crept away, away

To the farthestmost wall and the outmost gate,
And there they stand patiently day by day,

For well do they know they need but to wait.

They need but to wait; for the trees they know

Of the cities of old, how they grew and grew,
How they covered the plain in the long ago—

And the trees they will whisper a tale o'ertrue
Of the cities that drove them with arms outflung

Till they hid in their fear on the farther hills
And harked to the threatening songs then sung

By the clattering streets and the roaring mills.

The grass it will tell how it shrank and fled

From iron and steel and from brick and stone,
But waited afar till the city, dead,

THE CONQUERORS

Gave leave that the grass might regain its own ;
And the grass, as it rustles beneath the wind,
The trees as they whisper with airy breath
Tell legends of ages that came to find
The ruins that told of a city's death.

The city it says to the trees and grass :
"Make way for me, way!" and they bow and go.
But listen to them when some day you pass
And hark to the words they are whispering low,
How calmly they bide in their agelong wait
And murmur of cities and lands and men—
They stand at the outermost wall and gate
Until they shall come to their own again.

THE CURSE OF JOTHAM

"And upon them came the curse of Jotham the son of Jerubbaal."—The Book of Judges ix., 27.

And thus have you lied, and so have you lied,
And thus have you wrought me wrong—
And I curse you now by the truth denied
That shall cut like a hissing thong;
By the hope you crushed, by the faith you broke,
By the grief that you rendered worse,
It shall drift in your eyes in the altar smoke
Till you cower beneath my curse.

I have dreamed of this in the darkened days
And brooded in wrath at night,
I have fought with your lies in the gloomy ways
When wrestling to gain my right;
With a curse that is keen as a serpent's tooth
I swear you shall bend to me—
As deathless and great as the sleepless truth
This curse that I make shall be.

Though a man go down to the house of death
Revenge is a living thing
That will pulse its way as an outblown breath
Where the stars in their courses swing,

THE CURSE OF JOTHAM

That will follow far past the dying suns
Through the orbits devised of old
Till it reach the place of the faithless ones
Where the planets have long grown cold.

And thus have you lied, and so have you lied—
My spirit can bide and wait
With the faith you broke and the truth denied
Till it find you before the gate,
And there in the glow of a light sublime
In a vast eternal place
I shall tear all the truth from the page of time
And shall fling it against your face.

“LOOK AT THE STARS ”

“I have showed thee new things from this time, even hidden things, and thou didst not know them.”—Isaiah xlviii., 6.

“Look at the stars” . . .

I look and see

The same familiar face of night,
As common as all things that be
Spread constantly before the sight.
And then I earthward turn my eyes
With mocking smiles for those who fret
The simple people and the wise
With blinking stars that rise and set.

“Look at the stars” . . .

Again I gaze

And mark the stateliness outspread
Until it seems that marvel ways
Are slowly opened overhead,
Until in fancy I may trace
The regal progress of each star
Upon some great highroad of space
That leads forever wide and far.

LOOK AT THE STARS

“Look at the stars” . . .

There, where a world
In the illimitable deep,
Its draperies of darkness furled,
Waits to be summoned from its sleep;
There where the stillness takes on form,
Where very nothingness is filled
With worlds that circle, swarm on swarm;
Where the eternal builders build!

“Look at the stars” . . .

Now to my ken
Comes that which makes me understand
The soulspeech of those ancient men:
“Within the hollow of his hand.”
The full tides of the centuries,
By billows of creation tossed,
Chant the primeval melodies
That in the hush of years are lost.

“Look at the stars” . . .

Sun shouts to sun;
I hear deep calling unto deep;
Dead worlds and planets but begin
Keep pace with the unending sweep.
It is no common, starflecked sky—
It is a page of some great book
Writ as the ages journey by.
My eyes are closed. I dare not look.

WHEN A GOOD MAN DIES

"A good man leaveth an inheritance to his children's children."—Proverbs xiii., 22.

Somehow, when a good man dies,
When he folds his hands in rest,
We look in in dumb surprise
At the ending of his quest.
We go forth in mute amaze
From the chamber hushed and dim,
Walking his accustomed ways,
Feeling still we are with him.

Now we mark the words he said,
We recount his golden deeds,
Name the times that he has led—
Feel that some way still he leads,
Though we see that dreamless sleep
Which comes softly, on a breath
Wafted from the wings that keep
All the mystery of death:

We know this: that he has gone
Out upon the hidden way
Which leads through the silver dawn
Of the far, eternal day,

WHEN A GOOD MAN DIES

Yet there lingers now the touch
Of his strongly helpful hand
Which we clung to overmuch—
And we blindly understand.

When a good man dies, we see
As though standing face to face
What he dared and hoped to be.
Aye, from some eternal place
Comes full knowledge; and we know
All the word that he would give;
That his quest is won, and so
In his work he still must live.

Then the inner truth we grasp,
And each of us understands
What great peace is his to clasp
In his quiet, folded hands.

THE GOOD WORD

*"If there be any virtue, and if there be any praise."—
The Epistle to the Philippians, iv., 8.*

He has his faults; aye, faults that glare,
And weaknesses that work him ill—
But well he knows the faults are there
To test his store of strength and will.
But hidden in his heart of hearts
Or maybe shining forth alone
Is his good trait. The censure smarts
And sears till he is overthrown.
Speak the good word.

Forsooth, because he is your friend
You may not claim the right to chide,
To flout and damn world without end
That foibles that he fain would hide.
There must be something in the man
To echo to the words that lift—
If you may find no wiser plan
Then let the derelict go drift.
Speak the good word.

The pity is that when one peers
At minor faults with critic's eyes,

THE GOOD WORD

He blends his judgment with his jeers
And oft his vision magnifies.
There is some good. But look as well
For it as you do for the bad
And praise it! Thus you work a spell
That no deep mystic ever had.
Speak the good word.

Speak the good word—the word that gives
The newer impulse and the hope;
The word that helps, and grows, and lives—
A light to them that blindly grope
Through all the darkness of despair.
They know their faults, and know them well;
Of censurings they have their share—
The kind words are the ones that tell.
Speak the good word.

THE RED SEA

"And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground; and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left."—Exodus xiv., 22.

Before, the sea whose waves tossed high
Their gleaming lances to the sky,
That bent to bar the further sight;
Behind, the foe on plain and height,
With sword and banner flashing free,
As did the white spray of the sea.

Then murmurings of dire complaint
From those whose souls and hearts were faint
And bitter speech from those who eyed
By turns the hemming troop and tide.
Yet one thought never of retreat,
But to the sea he turned his feet.

Out, out, far out across the tide
A path was flung, full, fair and wide,
With wondrous walls that surged and rolled
Upon themselves, the way to hold—
And faint hearts with new gladness thrilled;
The foe's triumphant shout was stilled.

THE RED SEA

Through all the battlings of the years
Men have faced seas of doubts and fears,
While down the way that they had won
The foe, relentless, followed on—
And some, while yet the promise pealed,
Have weakly bent the knee, to yield.

But some there are—great souls and brave—
Who have gone breasting storm and wave,
And who have crossed the sea dryshod
On paths no other feet have trod.
Aye, blind is he who will not say
Red Seas are being cleft today!

A HYMN OF THANKSGIVING

“ * * * *Out of his treasures.*”—*Psalms cxxxv.*, 7.

Thou who art Lord of the wind and rain,
Lord of the east and western skies
And of the hilltop and the plain
And of the stars that sink and rise,
Keeper of Time's great mysteries
That are but blindly understood—
Give us to know that all of these
Labor together for our good.

Thou who must laugh at bounding line
Setting the little lands apart;
Thou who has given corn and wine,
Give to us each a thankful heart.
Show us the worth of wounds and scars,
Show us the grace that grows of grief,
Thou who hast flung the racing stars,
Thou who hast loosed the falling leaf.

Count us the treasures that we hold—
Wonderful peace of the wintry lands,
All of the summer's beaten gold
Poured in our eager, outheld hands;
Open the book of the rounded year



*"Thou who art Lord of the wind and rain,
Lord of the east and western skies."*

—A HYMN OF THANKSGIVING.



A HYMN OF THANKSGIVING

Paged with our pleasures and our pains—
Show us the writings where appear
Losses o'erbalanced by the gains.

Thou who art Lord of the sea and shore,
Lord of the gates of Day and Night—
This have we had of thy great store:
Laughter and love, and life and light,
Sorrow and sweetness, smile and song—
Blessings that blend in all of these—
Have them, and hold them overlong,
Out of thy wondrous treasures.

TRUTH

"Pilate saith unto him: 'What is truth?'"—John, xviii, 38.

This is truth: this that was made
When the stars' long paths were laid,
When eternity was planned,
When the stars came from the hand
That alone could mark and place
Each in its appointed space.

This is truth: the changeless sea
Where uncounted wonders be
And the sure, resistless tide
With its impulse half-world wide;
Tide that sways by east and west
With the world's ships on its breast.

This is truth: the hill and plain,
And the sunshine, and the rain:
And the shrub that simply knows
It must blossom with the rose;
And the tree that gives its share
In the fruit that it must bear.

TRUTH

Truth? We fools think it must hide
Some place else than tree or tide,
Some place farther than the stars—
Some place bound by mystic bars
Fettered by unyielding bands
Which defy our clumsy hands.

This is truth: this that was sung
When the stars' first song was flung
Out across the centuries;
This: the hills and plains and seas—
All the common things we scan
That are still untouched by man.

THE SLAIN

"Thou that art full of stirs, a tumultuous city, a joyous city; thy slain men are not slain with the sword nor dead in battle."—Isaiah xxi., 2.

They wander through the streets—the slain,
The living dead, whose weary eyes
Tell that they have a brother Cain
Who slew them surely, brotherwise.
Their brother Cain, perchance he laughed,
Perchance he frowned, or coldly lied—
But some way with his subtle craft,
He slew the part of them called pride.

And some are people of the day,
And some are people of the night,
Yet in their eyes there is no ray
Flung from the soul in living light,
No luster echoing a smile;
Already they have joined the dust—
Some brother Cain, with gentle guile
Has killed for them their hope and trust.

And there be some who daily see
The shadow of their shattered faith,
Who from that shade are never free—

THE SLAIN

Those haunted by their honor's wraith,
Aye, men and women these—the dead,
The dead that have not wholly died
But who have sepulchered instead
Their once great hope and trust and pride.

Soul-slain, beleaguered and foredoomed,
They count the dice that fate has cast
And dream, while dead but unentombed,
Of what they would forget—the past.
By unrelenting fortune led
They wandered through the streets—the slain.
But who may know the living dead?
And who may know the brother Cain?

THE BALANCE

"As with the buyer, so with the seller."—Isaiah xxiv., 2.

Now some buy not in the market place and some sell
not in the stalls,
And some have ware that they hawk abroad, though
not with a vendor's calls,
And some find profit in doubt and fear and some in
barter and trade—
Yet whether we buy or whether we sell we boast of
what we have made.

And one plays knave with the blinded faith another
has put in his hands,
And many an Ahab basks today in the peace of a Na-
both's lands;
And many there are with goods to sell and many there
are that buy—
But always a truth must buy a truth and always a lie
a lie.

But whether you buy or whether you sell the ways of
guile are vain
For the balanced Book of the Deeds of Men shows
neither loss nor gain.

THE BALANCE

Now some buy stuff of a tinsel'd weave and call it the
 robe of fame;
And some pay dear for a hollow sound and call it an
 honored name;
And some go far in a weary search to purchase a
 fabled gem,
But find it not till they wander home—and there it
 has been for them.

But each one sees what his brother does, and knows
 where his brother's feet
Go faring far on the winding path through the valley
 of deceit,
But each one thinks that his brothers look at himself
 with a trusting eye—
When only a truth will buy a truth and only a lie a
 lie.

For whether you buy or whether you sell, or bide by
 the gamester's toss,
The balanced Book of the Deeds of Men shows neither
 gain nor loss.

SORROW

"And ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be changed into joy."—The Gospel according to St. John, xvi., 20.

I drove Sorrow out one day—
This was long, and long ago—
Fiercely thrust her far away;
Her I would no longer know.
I called Pleasure to my side,
Trolling forth a jolly song.
"Well done!" Pleasure gayly cried,
"Gray garbed grief was ever wrong."

Feast, and jest, and song, and wine,
Laughing shout, and ringing toast
Pleasure had of me and mine—
He the guest and I the host;
Till the years had gone their gait
And I halted, old and tired,
Wondering by dawn and late
What it was that I desired.

Then the candles guttered down
And the sun came streaming in;
I saw Pleasure's tawdry crown

SORROW

And the wrinkles of his grin;
I saw Pleasure's lying eyes—
This I saw; all this and more—
And I thrust him varletwise
From my house, and closed the door.

Then I sat, and sat alone
Marveling upon the end,
Hungering for touch or tone
From an one who was my friend;
There I sat—and from the road
Rang a laugh that gave me word
Pleasure had a new abode;
'Twas his hollow laugh I heard.

There came one full silently,
Calm of face and sweet of eyes,
Came and stood and gazed on me
While I looked up with surprise.
“Stranger,” begged I, “linger here
For your heart alone is true.”
“I have waited year on year,”
Smiled the Sorrow I once knew.

AS A FOOL DIETH

"Thy hands were not bound, nor thy feet put into fetters."—The Second Book of Samuel, iii., 33.

Do you remember the day you died?
Do not look at me wondering-eyed,
But answer truly and answer fair—
How and when was your soul stripped bare?
Pride, or cunning, or greed, or pelf—
Which of these was it slew yourself?

Truly, you walk as you used to walk,
Laugh, and listen, and smile, and talk,
Sell and barter—but do you live?
Who knows harm he cannot forgive?
Who knows all that you fain would hide—
All that happened the day you died?

What was the thing that can ever keep
From your eyelids the balm of sleep?
What the weakness that gave release
To dull guilt-whispers that will not cease?
What left longings in dark for light,
What left prayings in day for night?

AS A FOOL DIETH

Do you remember the day you died?
What far place—? Ah, the world is wide,
Yet the pulses of thought are swift
And the curtains that hide will lift
Till the truth that you fear they show.
None may see it; but you—you know!

“CHUMS”

“Then Jonathan and David made a covenant.”—I. Samuel, xviii., 1.

Chum of mine of long ago,
I would reach across the years
To the days we used to know,
To the laughter and the tears;
Fain would find the songs we knew—
Brave old songs they were, in truth,
Songs that cheered for me and you
All the golden paths of youth.

I would journey back again
To the parting of the ways,
Journey from this world of men
To the wondrous other days;
I would find the meadow lands
Odorous of mint and musk,
Find the fields where shadow hands
Trailed the draperies of dusk.

Chum of mine that used to be—
Ho, the world is long and wide;
You have fared by land and sea,
Stout of heart and eager eyed!

CHUMS

I have footed here and there,
But in alien lands there come
Murmurs from the days all fair
When we hailed each other: "Chum."

Time has lined your face and mine,
Age has made your hair snow white—
Yet each wrinkle and each line
Fades out in the gentle light
Of the memories we hold
Of the days when field and tree
And the meadow lands outrolled
Were the world for you and me.

Chum of mine! I blindly reach
Till again I touch your hand—
Thoughts we cannot put in speech
Come to us. We understand.
Chum of mine! I fill the cup
To the past of you and me—
Pledge it, ere we drink it up:
To the days that used to be!

A GOOD NIGHT

"He giveth his beloved sleep."—Psalm cxxvii., 2.

"Sleep dwell upon thine eyes, peace in thy breast"—
The stars drift slowly down into the west,
The drowsing breeze sighs faintly on the hill;
Save for its song the wide, wide world is still.

Night has one cure for Day's one thousand cares,
One healing balm within her clasp she bears—
The blessed sleep that makes our frowns grow smooth,
The blessed sleep, to comfort and to soothe.

The battles of the day have left their scars;
There is no warfare now; the marching stars
Wheel patiently and surely from the east
And all Day's trumpet challenges have ceased.

From the illimitable depths of night
There breathes a lullaby no pen can write,
A melody that lives through ages long—
The half-hushed, mystic, wistful slumber song.

There are no wounds that ache, no stings that smart
Once sleep has flung her spell about the heart.
Forget the weary road, the endless quest—
"Sleep dwell upon thine eyes, peace in thy breast."

AFTERWARD

"Have the gates of death been opened unto thee? or hast thou seen the doors of the shadow of death?"—Job, xxxviii., 17.

Just to lie down and rest;
To fold the hands?
To toil no more; nor quest
Through alien lands?
To strive no more; nor gaze
At Hope's far gleam?
To know no clashing days,
Nor even dream?

Can it be so? That we
Shall drone and drift
Down some eternal sea,
Shall never lift
Horizons new and strange?
Shall find no dawn
Whose constant sense of change
Shall lure us on?

No profit of the years
In toiling spent;
Nor foolish faiths, nor fears—

AFTERWARD

But dull content?
No place with them that build?
No task to do?
Our hearts forever stilled;
No plannings new?

Or, haply, does the night
That blurs and bars
Hide all the paths of light
That thread the stars.
Conceal from our poor eyes,
The worlds that wait
Till we come pilgrimwise
With souls elate?

Just to lie down and rest—
And that is all?
Or, better still, and best,
To hear a call
Which none but souls set free
May understand:
“The greatest tasks that be
Await thy hand!”





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